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CHILLING TALES OF HORROR AND SUSPENSE

**TOMB
OF THE
CURSED
CORPSE**
**VISION
OF
DEATH**
**THE
VAMPIRE
SWOOPS**
**KILLERS
FROM
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SHOCK

CHILLING TALES OF HORROR AND SUSPENSE

NOVEMBER 1970

CONTENTS

VOL. 2, NO. 5

VISION OF DEATH 4

The first time the dream came he thought it was just a trick of his imagination. But it wasn't long before he realized that he was in the grip of ungovernable evil

TOMB OF THE CURSED CORPSE 12

She used her ancient beauty to entrap a mortal man because only through the hands of a living soul could the curse of the ages be lifted forever

THE VAMPIRE SWOOPS 20

In a tiny hamlet, far off the beaten pathways of American civilization, a pack of foul-mouthed bloodsuckers held the people in a grip of horror

KILLERS FROM HELL 30

He thought he was above politics and international intrigue. But the day came when he was forced to pit his own life against the godless red terror

THE SHAMAN WALKED 37

Within the idol lurked a spirit that could not die. And when those it had befriended were threatened, its vengeance became something too awful to behold

SHIP OF THE WALKING DEAD 44

One by one the crew perished before the onslaught of a creature too fiendish to be believed, too wily to be overcome by any weapons a mortal could bring to bear

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EVER FIND YOURSELF WALKING DOWN A STREET... A STREET YOU KNEW YOU'D NEVER SEEN... AND YET EXPERIENCE THE EERIE, FRIGHTENING SENSATION THAT SOMETIME, IN THE SHADOWY PAST, YOU'D BEEN THERE BEFORE? IT'S STRANGE, MYSTERIOUS... BUT IT'S HAPPENED TO MANY OF US! BUT ALEX CARTER HAD AN EVEN STRANGER VISION... WHEN PATE JOINED UP WITH THE FORCES OF THE UNKNOWN, BRINGING HIM THE PICTURE OF HIS OWN DEATH!

THE STATE PRISON DEATH CELL... ALEX CARTER GRANTS A LAST INTERVIEW...

SO YOU WANT TO KNOW THE STORY OF MY LIFE... THE **TRUE** STORY, EH? WELL, THERE ARE SOME FACTS WHICH **DIDN'T** COME OUT AT MY TRIAL... BUT SINCE I'M GOING TO DIE ANYWAY, I MIGHT AS WELL SPILL 'EM!... **GET READY FOR THE SURPRISE OF YOUR LIFE, MR. REPORTER!**



IT ALL BEGAN WHEN I WAS A DOCTOR ON THE STAFF OF THE FAIRVIEW HOSPITAL! I'D BEEN HAVING STRANGE, DISTURBING NIGHTMARES, AND THEY INTERFERED WITH MY WORK! I COULDN'T SEEM TO CONCENTRATE ON MY PATIENTS... THE CHIEF SAWLED ME OUT CONTINUALLY...



"THERE WAS ONE PATIENT--A WEALTHY WOMAN WITH A RHEUMATIC LEG WHO'D CONTRIBUTED LARGE SUMS TO THE HOSPITAL--I HAD TO TREAT HER CAREFULLY! AS I EXAMINED HER, I FELT AN ODD, SWIRLING SENSATION-- AND AN AWFUL IMAGE FORMED BEFORE MY EYES!"



I...I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT, MRS. ANDERSON, BUT YOUR LEG...IT'S GOING TO CAUSE YOUR DEATH!

WHAT? WHY, I'VE HAD RHEUMATISM FOR YEARS! I'LL COMPLAIN TO DR. ADAMS--TELLING ME RIDICULOUS NONSENSE LIKE THAT!

Later...

I MUST HAVE BEEN CRAZY, BLABBING ALL THAT BECAUSE OF A STUPID VISION!

I JUST SAW MRS. ANDERSON, AND SHE'S TOLD ME SHE'LL CONTRIBUTE NO MORE MONEY TO THIS HOSPITAL! YOU'RE FIRED, YOU YOUNG FOOL! I--SAY, WHAT'S HAPPENED OUTSIDE?



THAT WAS IT--MY FIRST GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE! IT CAUSED HER DEATH AND THE LOSS OF MY JOB! AND DR. ADAMS MADE SURE THAT I COULDN'T GET ANOTHER! BUT WORSE THAN THAT, I HAD THE AWFUL FEELING THAT I'D HAVE MORE VISIONS...WITH EVEN MORE HORRIBLE RESULTS!



SHE WALKED RIGHT IN FRONT OF MY CAR--AND HER LEG SEEMED TO GIVE 'WAY! SHE COULDN'T GET OUT OF THE PATH OF THE CAR IN TIME!

YOU SEE? YOU SCARED HER SO SHE DIDN'T EVEN SEE THAT AUTO COMING! IT'S YOUR FAULT! YOU KILLED HER!



"HOW RIGHT I WAS! IT WAS WEEKS LATER WHEN I SAW THIS MAN--AND A TERRIFYING IMAGE--"



HE'S AIMING AT ME!

"DON'T RUN, WHEN THIS WAS FATE? HE'D FIND ME--KILL ME! AND SO I FOLLOWED HIM, KNOWING THAT THERE WAS ONLY ONE WAY OUT!"

IF I'M GOING TO SAVE MYSELF, I--I'VE GOT TO FINISH HIM OFF, FIRST!



"HIS OFFICE WAS MARKED **MEDICAL PUBLICATIONS**? AS A DOCTOR, MAYBE I COULD GET A JOB THERE...WATCH HIM UNTIL I SAW MY CHANCE..."



HMMM... I **COULD** USE A PHYSICIAN FOR TECHNICAL ARTICLES! I'D BE HAPPY TO HAVE YOU JOIN OUR STAFF!



THANKS, MR. PRENTISS! YOU DON'T **REALIZE** WHAT I CAN DO FOR YOU!

"**IRONICALLY**, PRENTISS SEEMED TO TAKE A LIKING TO ME! THEN CAME A DAY...A DAY I WISH HAD NEVER DAWNED..."

WE OUGHT TO BE MORE FRIENDLY, OLD MAN...AND I'M THROWING A LITTLE PARTY TONIGHT! THINK YOU CAN MAKE IT?

WHY, I... SUPPOSE SO!



HIS FIANCEE WAS THERE! SHE WAS BEAUTIFUL...AND FLIRTATIOUS! SHE LOOKED AT ME ONCE...AND I REALIZED **WHY** PRENTISS WOULD TRY TO KILL ME!



ALEX, MEET **ANGELA**...THE GIRL I'M GOING TO MARRY! I KNOW YOU TWO ARE GOING TO BE GOOD FRIENDS!

I'M SURE WE WILL...**VERY GOOD FRIENDS!**



"IT WAS A GOOD PARTY, BUT I WANTED NONE OF IT...OR OF **HER**! I HAD TO STOP IT...THE INEVITABLE FLOW OF EVENTS THAT WAS SO SURELY MOVING...TOWARD MY DEATH!"

SO **THERE** YOU ARE! HOW CAN WE BECOME FRIENDLY IF YOU...



PLEASE... **KEEP AWAY FROM ME!**

ANGELA! I WAS LOOKING FOR YOU...AND NOW I FIND YOU **HERE!** ER...WOULD YOU MIND IF I TALKED TO ALEX...**ALONE?**



SURELY YOU
DON'T THINK
THAT SHE---
I---

IT ISN'T THAT... BUT I KNOW SO
WELL WHAT SHE IS! BUT I
CAN'T HELP MYSELF... I LOVE
HER DESPERATELY!



"HIS WORDS SOUNDED CON-
VINING...BUT I DIDN'T BELIEVE
HIM! I WAS SURE THAT HE WAS JEAL-
OUS, THAT HE WAS LYING WHEN HE
PRETENDED NOT TO RESENT ME!
HE HATED ME... WANTED ME TO
RELAX MY GUARD SO HE COULD
STRIKE! I FELT THE COILS CLOSING
ABOUT ME, AND KNEW I HADN'T MUCH
TIME LEFT! I HAD TO GET HIM ---
SOON...BUT HOW? THE ANSWER
CAME SOON..."

ALEX MUST BE A GOOD SHOT...HE
SURE SEEMED **EAGER** WHEN I
INVITED HIM ON THIS HUNTING
PARTY!



"PRENTISS HAD PLAYED RIGHT INTO MY HANDS! YES, I
WANTED TO GO HUNTING...BUT NOT FOR DEER! I WAITED
FOR MY CHANCE...AND THEN..."

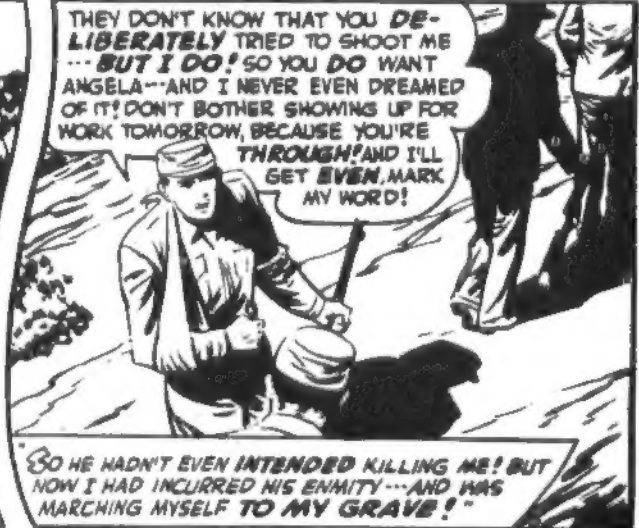
HE'S ALONE...
AND IN THE
OPEN! NOW!



DON'T FEEL SO BAD, CARTER...IT
WAS AN ACCIDENT! HE'S OKAY...
LUCKY YOU DIDN'T **KILL** HIM!



THEY DON'T KNOW THAT YOU **DE-
LIBERATELY** TRIED TO SHOOT ME
...BUT I DO! SO YOU DO WANT
ANGELA--AND I NEVER EVEN DREAMED
OF IT! DON'T BOTHER SHOWING UP FOR
WORK TOMORROW, BECAUSE YOU'RE
THROUGH! AND I'LL
GET EVEN, MARK
MY WORD!



SO HE HADN'T EVEN INTENDED KILLING ME! BUT
NOW I HAD INCURRED HIS ENMITY...AND WAS
MARCHING MYSELF TO MY GRAVE!"

"AND SO ONCE AGAIN I WAS JOBLESS! THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT---BUT FEAR! I WANDERED, POVERTY DOGGING MY STEPS, SINKING LOWER AND LOWER---WAITING FOR THE VENGEANCE I KNEW WOULD STRIKE!"

"DEEP WITHIN ME WELLED THE KNOWLEDGE THAT SOMETHING WAS GOING TO HAPPEN---SOON! AND A NEW VISION OCCURRED---SOMETHING UNEXPECTED!"



THAT IMAGE... IT COULDN'T BE! ANGELA AND I--- TOGETHER? IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

ALEX! ALEX!

IT'S--- IT'S YOU!

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU EVERYWHERE! DONALD PRENTISS HAS GONE CRAZY WITH JEALOUSY---HE REALIZES THAT IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT WHEN I MET YOU! WE---WE COULD BE HAPPY TOGETHER, I'M SURE OF IT!



WELL, I COULDN'T FIGHT MY FATE--- NOT WHEN SHE DREW ME LIKE A MAGNET! WE WERE MARRIED AND FLED TOWN IMMEDIATELY! SHE NURSED ME BACK TO HEALTH AND SEEMED A CHANGED WOMAN---SOFTER---



YOU'RE---LOVELY, DARLING! I THINK I'M WELL ENOUGH TO GET UP PRACTICE NOW---AND I OWE IT ALL TO YOU!

WE'LL ALWAYS BE HAPPY TOGETHER---I KNOW IT!



"YES, WE WERE HAPPY TOGETHER... FOR A WHILE! THEN, HER ATTITUDE SEEMED TO CHANGE! SHE SEEMED TO AVOID ME... STARTED COMING HOME LATE! I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT... UNTIL..."

IT'S HIM... **PRENTISS!** HE'S FOUND US, AND SHE'S SEEING HIM AGAIN!



Later...

I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I SAW YOU WITH DONALD PRENTISS TODAY!

SO WHAT? I'M TIRED OF YOU AND YOUR COWARDLY WAYS! AND YOU'VE **REALLY** GOT SOMETHING TO BE AFRAID OF **NOW!** HE WANTS ME TO BE HIS WIFE... SO MUCH THAT HE'S GOING TO KILL YOU!



"FEAR GNAWING AT MY VITALS, I TURNED AND RAN... BLINDLY! I FOUND MYSELF AT THE TOP OF A CLIFF, OUTSIDE OF TOWN... BITTER, BEATEN!"

IF ONLY I HADN'T TAKEN UP WITH HER... HADN'T BELIEVED THAT THE FATES WILLED ME TO MARRY HER!

TRIED TO TAKE HER AWAY FROM ME, DIDN'T YOU? I FOLLOWED YOU, AND NOW... YOU DIE!



PRENTISS! NO... NO... **KEEP AWAY!**

SHE'S THE ONLY THING I EVER LOVED... SO NOW I'M GOING TO... **OOF!**



"HE STUMBLER, LOWERING THE GUN... AND I SAW MY CHANCE! DESPERATELY I CHARGED... WE GRAPPLED AT THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF..."



HELP! HELP! AI-EEEEEE!



I'M FREE! I'VE BEATEN THE FATES! THE MAN WHO WAS GOING TO KILL ME... I'VE FINISHED HIM! I'VE **WON!**



"THE CLIFF WAS IN A REMOTE SPOT ... HIS BODY WOULD NEVER BE FOUND! NO ONE WOULD EVER SUSPECT ME ... NO ONE BUT ANGELA! I CAUGHT HER LOOKING AT ME STRANGELY, AND THE SUSPENSE MOUNTED! I HAD TO DO SOMETHING!"



THE STRAIN---IT'S TOO MUCH FOR ME! I'M GOING OUT OF MY HEAD---HARDLY KNOW WHAT I'M DOING ANY MORE! BUT I---I'VE GOT TO STOP HER FROM TALKING!

ALEX! WHY...WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME THAT WAY?



DON'T BE AFRAID, MY DEAR! ALL YOU'VE GOT TO DO IS WRITE A LITTLE NOTE SAYING YOU'RE TIRED OF ME, AND ARE RUNNING AWAY! AND YOU'LL DO IT... OR ELSE!



I...I'VE WRITTEN IT, JUST AS YOU WANTED! BUT THAT LOOK IN YOUR EYES! DON'T COME ANY CLOSER ... DON'T! HELP!

"IT WAS DONE...AND HER PRESENCE WOULD NO LONGER BE A MENACE TO ME! I THOUGHT I WAS SAFE ... UNTIL..."

OPEN UP, IN THE NAME OF THE LAW!

RAP! RAP!



LET ME GO! I DIDN'T KILL HER... SHE RAN AWAY FROM ME! I...I'LL EVEN SHOW YOU THE NOTE SHE LEFT!

I DON'T BLAME HER FOR LEAVING A MURDERER! SHE REPORTED HER SUSPICIONS OF YOU BEFORE SHE DISAPPEARED! IT TOOK US A WHILE TO FIND THE BODY... AND NOW WE'RE ARRESTING YOU FOR THE MURDER OF DONALD PRENTISS!



SO THAT'S WHY YOU FIND ME HERE, MR. REPORTER! EVEN IN DEATH, PRENTISS REACHED OUT AN AVENGING HAND!



YOU'RE WRONG, CARTER! I JUST GOT A CALL FROM THE GOVERNOR... AND YOU'VE BEEN REPRIEVED!

IT SEEMS THAT THAT WASN'T PRENTISS'S BODY THE POLICE FOUND, AFTER ALL! SOME OLD FOLKS JUST IDENTIFIED IT AS THEIR SON, FROM THE TATTOO MARKS IT CARRIED! YOU'RE GOING TO LIVE...BECAUSE THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN HOLD YOU ON!



NOT PRENTISS...BUT HOW...? THANKS, WARDEN!

I...I'M NOT GOING TO DIE! BUT YOU, MR. REPORTER...NOW YOU KNOW THAT I KILLED BOTH OF THEM! PLEASE, PLEASE DON'T TELL! I'LL DO ANYTHING IF... SAY, YOUR FACE! IT'S STARTING TO LOOK FAMILIAR...AS IF I'VE SEEN YOU SOMEWHERE BEFORE! GREAT HEAVENS...YOU'RE NO REPORTER! YOU'RE...



A NOBO FOUND ME... BROUGHT ME BACK TO CONSCIOUSNESS! AS I LAY THERE, GATHERING MY SENSES, I SUDDENLY GOT AN IDEA!

FEELIN' BETTER MISTER?

YES--IT'S A... GOOD THING YOU HAPPENED ALONG! A VERY GOOD THING!



I CAME HERE TO WATCH YOU SUFFER...AS I HAVE...TO GLOAT AS I WATCHED YOUR LAST HOURS! I LOVED ANGELA... BUT NOW THAT YOU'VE BEEN REPRIEVED...



I DON'T BLAME YOU FOR NOT RECOGNIZING ME BEFORE...NOT WITH THE PLASTIC SURGERY I NEEDED AFTER THAT FALL OVER THE CLIFF! YOU SEE...I WASN'T KILLED IN THAT FALL, AFTER ALL!



THERE WAS A ROCK NEAR MY HAND...AND I KNEW NOBODY WOULD MISS HIM! I DRESSED HIM IN MY CLOTHES, AND MADE SURE HE COULDN'T BE RECOGNIZED! THEN...I CONTACTED ANGELA!

...SO THAT'S THE STORY! I WANT YOU TO GO TO THE POLICE! TELL THEM THAT CARTER THREATENED ME, AND THAT I'M MISSING! DON'T TELL THEM WHERE MY BODY IS SUPPOSED TO BE...YOU WOULDN'T KNOW THAT! CARTER'S HASH WILL BE SETTLED...AND WE CAN BE MARRIED THEN!



AND SO ALEX CARTER DIED...EXACTLY AS HIS VISION HAD WARNED! DID THESE STRANGE IMAGES FROM OUT OF THE UNKNOWN REALLY FORETELL THE FUTURE? BY TRYING TO AVERT HIS DEATH, DID HE BUT MAKE HIS END MORE CERTAIN? DOES DARK DESTINY SHAPE OUR COURSE? WHAT DO YOUR THINK, READER?



TOMB OF THE CURSED CORPSE



A CHANCE VISIT TO THE EGYPTIAN DESERT BROUGHT TWO TREMENDOUS FORCES INTO TED JOHNSON'S LIFE! ONE WAS **BESA**---THE GOD WHOSE VERY NAME INVOKED A CURSE! THE OTHER WAS A GIRL WHOSE BENWITCHING FORM HELD A DOOM OLDER THAN THE PYRAMIDS---UNTIL THE NIGHT SHE RETURNED TO THE TOMB OF THE UNHOLY DEAD!

GO CAUTIOUSLY, EFFENDI! TOURISTS ARE NEVER TAKEN TO THIS SPOT-- TO MAKE SURE THEY DO NOT STRAY INTO THE TOMB!

SO **THAT'S** WHAT IT IS! BUT TOMBS ARE A DIME A DOZEN IN EGYPT--- WHY BE SO CAREFUL ABOUT **THIS ONE?**

BECAUSE WHOEVER ENTERS THE TOMB IS **CURSED**---TO PREVENT THEIR REMOVING ANY OF THE UNHOLY DEAD WHO HAVE LAIN INSIDE SINCE THE DAYS OF OUR ANCIENT KINGS! IT IS EASY TO JEER--- BUT SEVERAL YEARS AGO A SCIENTIST REMOVED ONE OF THE MUMMIES---AND DIED WITHIN AN HOUR AFTER HE REMOVED THE MUSTY WRAPPINGS!

SOUNDS GRIM--- BUT ALL I'M INTERESTED IN IS A GOOD CAMERA ANGLE! IF THERE'S A WHAMMY AROUND THE PLACE--- I DON'T THINK IT'LL BE WASTED ON ME!

BE WARNED, EFFENDI--- THE EVIL OF THE TOMB IS VERY OLD---AND IT LIVES!



FOR SEVERAL MINUTES, TED CONCENTRATES ON HIS CAMERA SHOTS...AND THEN...STARTING TO CLIMB DOWN...

STRANGE...WONDER
WHAT THAT THING
IS?



I'LL BE SWITCHED...IT'S AN IDOL OF ONE OF THE ANCIENT GODS! THE FACT THAT NO ONE'S FOUND IT PROVES THAT PEOPLE HAVE STAYED AWAY FROM THIS PLACE FOR CENTURIES...BUT FAR AS I'M CONCERNED...IT'S A HANDY SIZE FOR A SOUVENIR!



FOR A FLEETING MOMENT...TED HESITATES AT THE SILENT PORTAL!

COULD BE JUST THE POWER OF SUGGESTION...BUT THERE'S SOMETHING FORBIDDING ABOUT THIS PLACE...AND IT'S GOT A TOUCH OF FASCINATION!

MOMENT LATER...

I'M NOT ONE TO STICK MY NECK OUT...BUT I KEEP THINKING ABOUT WHAT THAT NATIVE SAID! "UNHOLY DEAD"..."EVIL THAT LIVES"...I'D BE A CHUMP NOT TO TAKE A LOOK AROUND!



NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT...I CAN FEEL MYSELF BEING DRAWN TOWARD THIS MUMMY CASE! AND THE MORE I LOOK AT IT...THE MORE CERTAIN I AM THAT IT'S GIVING OFF A WEIRD GLOW!



THEN...AS LAUGHTER RINGS FROM THE SHADOWS LIKE TINKLING CAMEL BELLS...

HA
HA
HA!



WHAT THE DEVIL IS THIS...SOME KIND OF CORNY TRICK COOKED UP FOR TOURISTS?

DO YOU DOUBT WHAT YOU SEE? WE HAVE MET...SOON WE SHALL KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER...AND THEN I WILL ASK YOU FOR SOME TRIFLING TOKEN TO HELP ME REMEMBER YOU!



**AS THE SWAYING FIGURE
VANISHES...**

HER BODY SEEMED TO
DWINDLE BACK INTO THE
MUMMY CASE---BUT THE
THING'S COMPLETELY
EMPTY!



WHY SHOULD A BEAUTIFUL PHANTOM
GLIDE OUT OF SOMETHING THAT
SHOULD CONTAIN A MUMMY?
IS THAT THE MUMMY CASE THE
SCIENTIST TAMPERED WITH---
OR DID I DREAM UP THE WHOLE
THING AFTER DRIVING AROUND
TOO LONG IN THE
BLAZING SUN?



THAT NIGHT... AT TED'S HOTEL...

MIGHTY INTEREST-
ING TO HAVE A
GIRL LEAVE A
NOTE FOR ME
...BUT IT'S IN
ARABIC! WHAT'S
IT SAY?

GIRL WRITE SHE IS
DANCER...AND THAT
YOU MEET BEFORE!
SHE WANT YOU GO
TOMORROW NIGHT
TO MISRA CLUB!
MAZRA VERY BEAUTI-
FUL, EFFENDI!...YOU
CERTAIN TO RECOG-
NICE PICTURE!



THIS MAZRA...
YOU HAVE MEET
BEFORE,
EFFENDI?

HOLY
MACKEREL!



O.K., IT HAPPENED...BUT IT'S JUST A TELEPATHIC
TRICK! I MERELY HAD A GLIMPSE THIS AFTERNOON
OF SOMEONE I'M GOING TO MEET---AND MEDICAL
BOOKS ARE FULL OF HUNDREDS OF SIMILAR CASES!
AND ON THE OTHER HAND, I KEEP WONDERING...
ABOUT THAT TOMB!



**NEXT DAY... AT THE ROYAL
EGYPTIAN MUSEUM...**

MAYBE I'M NOSING AROUND
LIKE A SUPERSTITIONS CHUMP
...BUT I DON'T WANT TO BE
PREOCCUPIED WITH ANY
HALF-BAKED DOUBTS
WHEN I KEEP THAT
DATE WITH MAZRA
TONIGHT!



NO MR. JOHNSON---WE'VE NEVER
BEEN ABLE TO PROVE WHETHER
THE TOMB OF THE UNHOLY DEAD
WREAKS A CURSE ON ANYONE RE-
MOVING ONE OF THE MUMMIES!
I WOULD LIKE TO INVESTIGATE...
BUT NATIVE LABORERS WON'T
ENTER THE PLACE SINCE DR.
SURAT'S DEATH!

SO THAT
PART OF THE
STORY IS TRUE!
ABOUT THAT MUMMY
...WHAT
HAPPEN-
ED TO IT?



THE MUMMY WAS THAT OF A MINOR PRINCESS
...WHO HAD BEEN EXPELLED FROM THE
PHARAOH'S COURT FOR PRACTISING WIT-
CHCRAFT! DR. SURAT'S DEATH MAY HAVE BEEN
A COINCIDENCE...BUT THE FACT REMAINS
THAT WHEN HIS BODY WAS FOUND---
**THERE WAS NO TRACE OF THE
UNCOVERED MUMMY!**



THE NATIVES CLAIM THAT DR. SURAT WAS CURSED BY THE ANCIENT GOD **BESA**---WHO OPPOSED THE POWERS OF EVIL! PERHAPS BESA WANTED THE MUMMIES OF THE PRINCESS AND HER DISCIPLES TO REMAIN SAFELY ENTOMBED... WHO KNOWS?

IN THAT CASE---THE ANCIENT PRIESTS WOULD MAKE SURE THAT BESA WATCHED OVER THE TOMB! IS THERE ANY WAY TO FIND OUT WHAT BESA LOOKED LIKE?

THERE AREN'T MANY KNOWN STATUES OF BESA---BUT YOU MAY FIND SOME PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE LIBRARY! IN FACT, THE ENTIRE PERIOD HAS BEEN FILED UNDER THE NAME OF THE PRINCESS--- **MAZRA!**

MAZRA! THANKS, BUT I THINK I'VE LEARNED ENOUGH---RESEARCH WOULD BE A SHEER WASTE OF TIME!



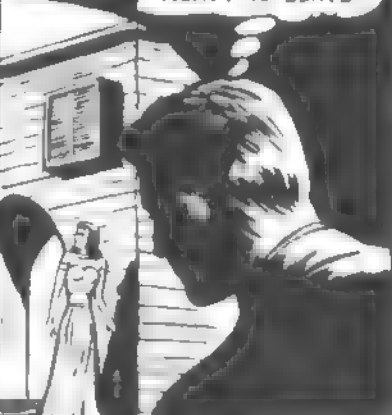
LATE THAT NIGHT...

MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA TO PRETEND I'VE **BROKEN** THAT DATE WITH MAZRA---AND FOLLOW HER WHEN SHE LEAVES THE NIGHT CLUB! I'M NOT JUMPING AT ANY CONCLUSIONS, BUT THIS BUSH JACKET MAY COME IN HANDY---NIGHTS ARE PRETTY COOL OUT IN THE DESERT!



IN THE SHADOWED NATIVE QUARTER...

MAYBE I'M A CHUMP---STANDING UP A CHICK LIKE THAT! BUT NOW THAT SHE'S SURE I'M NOT GOING TO MEET HER... SHE'S READY TO LEAVE!



THERE'S NO USE PRETENDING I JUST **IMAGINED** WHAT TOOK PLACE IN THE TOMB! MAZRA'S REAL ENOUGH NOW---BUT THE THING THAT PUT ITS ARMS AROUND ME WAS A **PHANTOM!**



MILES BEYOND...WITH THE MOONLIGHT GLINTING ON THE ENDLESS SAND...

WELL...THIS **CLINCHES** THINGS! MAZRA MAY PASS HERSELF OFF AS A DANCER... BUT **HERE'S** THE PLACE WHERE SHE REALLY BELONGS---THE TOMB OF THE UNHOLY **DEAD!**



YOU WHO FOLLOWED MAZRA ALONG THE WAY OF EVIL---HEAR ME!

GOOD LORD...WHO'S SHE TALKING TO? THE ONLY THINGS IN THERE ARE **MUMMIES**---**DEAD FOR CENTURIES!**



AS TED GLIPS THROUGH THE DARKENED DOORWAY...

YE GODS... SHE'S INVOKED THE EVIL SPIRITS IN THOSE MUMMY CASES!

I ESCAPED FROM THE WORLD OF THE UNHOLY DEAD WHEN A MORTAL UNWOUND THE WRAPPINGS THAT ENCLOSED MY BODY... THE WRAPPINGS THE PRIESTS MADE A PRISON WHEN THEY SPOKE THE NAME OF BESA! BUT MAZRA HAS NOT FORGOTTEN YOU... AND SHE VOWS YOU WILL SOON BE FREE!

THE IDOL OF BESA WAS PLACED ABOVE THIS PORTAL... AND I COULD NOT CLAIM IT UNTIL IT WAS TOUCHED BY LIVING HANDS! BUT MY BEAUTY IS BEWITCHING THE MORTAL WHO FOUND IT... SOON HE WILL GLADLY YIELD WHATEVER I DESIRE... AND THE TALISMAN OF BESA WILL BE OURS!



SUDDENLY... LIKE THE QUICK WITHERING OF A VENOMOUS BLOSSOM...

THE FOOL DOESN'T REALIZE THAT THE TALISMAN WILL BE THE VERY THING THAT LEADS HIM TO ME... BECAUSE IT BESTOWS THE SUPERNATURAL POWER TO DETECT AND DESTROY EVIL!

GOOD LORD... WHAT'S HAPPENING TO HER FACE?

HA HA! HOW COULD HE GUESS THE TRUTH... NOT HAVING SEEN ME AS I REALLY AM... THE SHRIVELED REMNANT OF A BODY THAT WAS ENTOMBED TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO?



BLAZES... I CAN'T BEAR TO LOOK AT THAT HIDEOUS THING!

BY THE POWERS OF DARKNESS... HE'S HERE!

HOW FOOL-HARDY CAN A MORTAL BE... FOLLOWING ME TO A PLACE OF DOOM?

WHOSE DOOM MAZRA? NOW THAT I KNOW WHAT THE TALISMAN OF BESA CAN DO... I'M GOING TO SEND YOU BACK TO THE WORLD OF THE UNHOLY DEAD FOREVER!

YE GODS! THE IDOL'S IN THE POCKET OF MY OTHER COAT... BACK AT THE HOTEL!

AND WITHOUT IT... WHAT? YOU HAVE COME TO A VAULT OF TERROR FEW HUMANS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO ENTER... BECAUSE FEW HAVE ESCAPED!



THEN---PAST THE WATCHING EYES OF THE UNHOLY DEAD---

YOU HAVE HELD ME CLOSE AND KNOWN THE FIRE OF MY EMBRACE! YOU HAVE SHOWN YOURSELF READY TO FALL IN LOVE WITH EVIL---AND THAT ALONE HAS WON YOU THE SINGLE CHANCE TO SAVE YOUR LIFE!



CLASP ME TO YOU AGAIN---AND VOW YOU WILL SURRENDER THE TALISMAN! DO THAT, AND YOU WILL NEVER DIE---AND MAZRA WILL ALLURE YOU AS SHE DID BEFORE---FOR- EVER!



FAR FROM BUYING THE IDEA OF FOREVER---I CAN'T STAND BEING AROUND YOU ANOTHER SECOND!

YOU HAVE SPURNED NOT A WOMAN--- BUT A CREATURE WHOSE EVIL WILL DESTROY YOU! AS LONG AS YOU CARRIED THE TALISMAN OF BESA, I COULD OBTAIN IT ONLY IF YOU GAVE IT TO ME OF YOUR OWN FREE WILL--- BUT NOW IT IS MINE TO FIND! I WILL GO TO YOUR HOTEL ---AND BY THE TIME I RETURN---YOU WILL HAVE KNOWN THE HORROR THAT CAN BE WREAKED BY THE UNHOLY DEAD!



LET THE ORDEAL OF TERROR BEGIN ---LET THE SPIRITS OF MY DISCIPLES DO MY BIDDING!

GREAT GUNS---I'M ALMOST SURE I FELT THAT THING MOVE!



THEN---

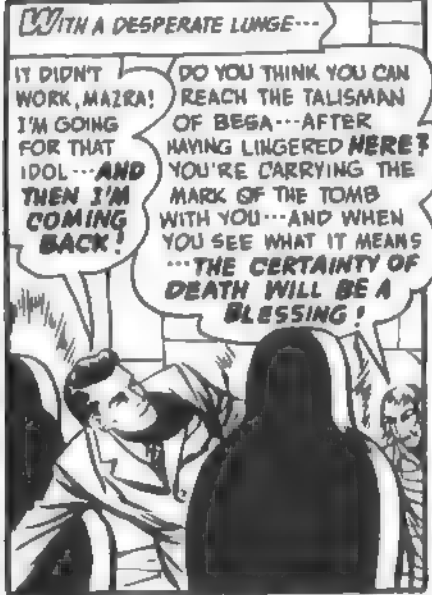
THEY'RE MOVING TOGETHER! IN ANOTHER SECOND---I'LL BE CRUSHED LIKE AN EGG SHELL!



WITH A DESPERATE LUNGE---

IT DIDN'T WORK, MAZRA! I'M GOING FOR THAT IDOL---AND THEN I'M COMING BACK!

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN REACH THE TALISMAN OF BESA---AFTER HAVING LINGERED HERE? YOU'RE CARRYING THE MARK OF THE TOMB WITH YOU---AND WHEN YOU SEE WHAT IT MEANS ---THE CERTAINTY OF DEATH WILL BE A BLESSING!

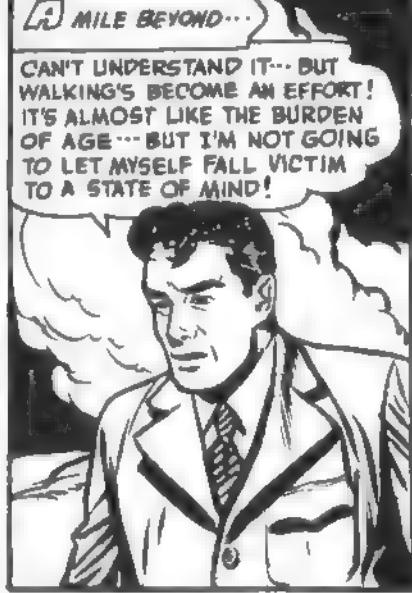


STRANGE SHE DIDN'T TRY TO STOP ME! IT'S NOT THAT I'M BEGINNING TO BELIEVE THIS BUSINESS ABOUT THE CURSE---AND YET---WHAT DID MAZRA MEAN BY THE MARK OF THE TOMB?



A MILE BEYOND---

CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT--- BUT WALKING'S BECOME AN EFFORT! IT'S ALMOST LIKE THE BURDEN OF AGE--- BUT I'M NOT GOING TO LET MYSELF FALL VICTIM TO A STATE OF MIND!



AN HOUR LATER... AS A GAUNT AND STAGGERING FIGURE PACES DOGGEDLY THROUGH THE STREETS OF CAIRO...

I'M READY TO DROP... BUT NO MATTER WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME... I'M GOING TO REACH THE HOTEL!



THEN, AS TED STUMBLES EXHAUSTED INTO THE LOBBY...

ANYTHING WRONG, EFFENDI? YOUR FACE... IT... IT...



COME ON... WHERE'S MY KEY? YE GODS, DON'T PRETEND YOU'VE NEVER SEEN ME BEFORE AT A TIME LIKE THIS... I'M TED JOHNSON!

IT SPEAKS... BUT A THING LIKE THIS CANNOT EXIST!



AS TED REACHES FRANTICALLY TOWARD THE KEY RACK...

GOOD LORD... WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME?



A MOMENT LATER...

MAZRA! SHE'S COMING FOR THE TALISMAN... AND SHE WOULDN'T BE TAKING HER TIME IF SHE DIDN'T EXPECT TO FIND ME FINISHED OFF BY THIS CREEPING DEATH!



THEN... CLUTCHED BY THE COLD NUMBNESS OF AGE...

THE MARK OF THE TOMB... IT'S LIKE A PARALYZING BLIGHT... AND ONCE I STOP MOVING... I'M LICKED!



INCH BY INCH... SPURRED BY THE LAST DIM SPARK OF LIFE...

THE TALISMAN! LOOK AT HIM... GROVELING TOWARD IT!





WHAT CAN THE TALISMAN DO FOR YOU? WHEN YOU REJECTED ME... YOU TURNED AWAY FROM THE ONLY THING THAT COULD SAVE YOU!

BESA... BESA! SHIELD ME... FROM... THE UNHOLY DEAD!



AN AMBER FLASH FILLS THE ROOM...

LOOK, MAZRA! DO YOU SEE IT?

BESA!



WITH A VOICE THAT DRONES FROM THE FORGOTTEN PAST...

IN THE NAME OF THE REALM OF DARKNESS... BY THE POWER OF THE KINGDOM OF THE BEYOND... LET WHAT IS EVIL PERISH IN EVIL... FOREVER!

BESA... NO! NO!

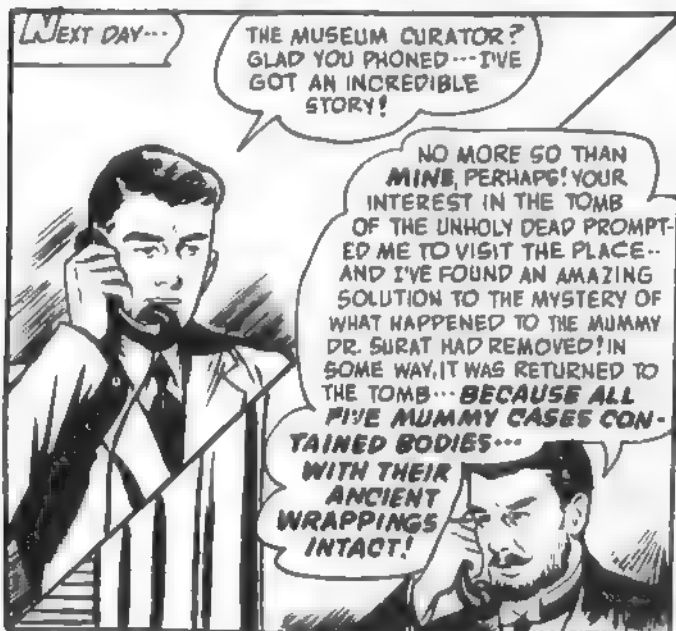


AAAGH!



IN THE NEXT SECOND...

SHE'S DISAPPEARING! THIS TIME IT ISN'T A MERE PHYSICAL CHANGE... THE THING THAT'S DOOMED FOR ALL TIME IS HER SOUL!



NEXT DAY...

THE MUSEUM CURATOR? GLAD YOU PHONED... I'VE GOT AN INCREDIBLE STORY!

NO MORE SO THAN MINE, PERHAPS! YOUR INTEREST IN THE TOMB OF THE UNHOLY DEAD PROMPTED ME TO VISIT THE PLACE... AND I'VE FOUND AN AMAZING SOLUTION TO THE MYSTERY OF WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MUMMY DR. SURAT HAD REMOVED! IN SOME WAY, IT WAS RETURNED TO THE TOMB... BECAUSE ALL FIVE MUMMY CASES CONTAINED BODIES... WITH THEIR ANCIENT WRAPPINGS INTACT!



WELL... THAT'S THE WAY BESA WANTED IT! AND BEFORE I LEAVE EGYPT, I'M TAKING THIS TALISMAN BACK WHERE IT SHOULD BE... KEEPING GUARD OVER THE TOMB OF THE UNHOLY DEAD!

The VAMPIRE SWOOPS



YOU SENT
FOR ME,
SIR?

YES, DR. THORNTON! WE'VE JUST
RECEIVED AN URGENT LETTER FROM
A DR. HENRI CHARRON IN AN ISOLATED
HAMLET DEEP IN THE LOUISIANA
SWAMPS! IT SEEMS THAT THE INHABIT-
ANTS OF CHARVILLE HAVE ALL BEEN
STRANGELY AFFLICTED WITH A RARE
TYPE OF **ANEMIA**! DR. CHARRON
WANTED US TO SEND A SUPPLY OF
TONICS, VITAMIN PILLS AND
RESTORATIVES... BUT I'M SEND-
ING **YOU** INSTEAD!

U.S.
PUBLIC
HEALTH
SERVICE

THAT'S BECAUSE THE U.S.
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ALWAYS
INVESTIGATES CASES WHICH
MIGHT TURN OUT TO BE AN
EPIDEMIC OF A STRANGE, NEW
DISEASE! I'M ASSIGNING NURSE
SYLVIA HARDING TO ASSIST YOU
IN YOUR CLINICAL TESTS
IN CHARVILLE!

SWELL! AN
OPPORTUNITY FOR
RESEARCH... **AND**
MY FAVORITE
NURSE!

DOWN THROUGH THE AGES, MEN HAVE THRILLED TO STRANGE
TALES OF THE MYSTERIOUS **UNKNOWN**! NONE IS STRANGER,
HOWEVER, THAN THE WEIRD LEGEND OF THE **VAMPIRE**! HERE'S
A STORY ABOUT VAMPIRES... AND IT'S A STORY SUCH AS YOU'VE
NEVER READ! TURN THE LIGHTS DOWN LOW AS YOU SCAN THESE
PAGES... AND LEARN HOW **MODERN SCIENCE** MET A GRIM,
SUPERNATURAL SCIENCE... **AND WON OUT!**



THREE DAYS LATER, IN A SLEEPY LOUISIANA TOWN ON THE EDGE OF THE SWAMPS...

IS **THIS** CHARVILLE, HOWARD? IT'S NOTHING BUT A DROOPY OLD ONE-HORSE TOWN!

THIS IS JUST THE NEAREST RAILROAD STATION... **CHARVILLE** IS FAR SMALLER THAN **THIS**! IT'S ABOUT A DOZEN MILES INTO THE SWAMP, RIGHT IN THE HEART OF THE BAYOU COUNTRY... BUT WE CAN GET TO IT IN THAT HACK OVER THERE!



TAKE YUH TUH **CHARVILLE**?

WHY, I WOULDN'T GO THAR FER EVERY DOLLAR IN THE WORLD! **NO ONE** IN THESE PARTS HAS DARED GET FOOT IN THAT GWAMP FER OVER A CENTURY... BUT IF YUH'RE PLUMB CRAZY ENOUGH TUH **WANT** TUH GO... THAR'S THE ROAD!

THANKS FOR THE SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY, FRIEND! COME ON, SYLVIA... LET'S START WALKING!



THEN, INTO THE DYSMAL, FORBIDDING SWAMPS! INTO THE VERY HEART OF THE GREAT BAYOU COUNTRY... HOME OF THE STRANGE... THE EERIE... THE **UNKNOWN**!

IT'S DYSMAL... **SCARY**! MAYBE THE PEOPLE AROUND HERE ARE **RIGHT** IN BEING SO TERROR-STRICKEN ABOUT CHARVILLE AND THE SWAMPS! WHO KNOWS WHAT'S LURKING BEHIND THESE THICKETS?

DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE LETTING SOME SILLY LOCAL SUPERSTITIONS GET UNDER YOUR SKIN! WE'VE GOT TO GO ON... IT'S OUR **DUTY** TO HELP THE PEOPLE OF CHARVILLE!



ON AND ON, MILE AFTER WEARY MILE THROUGH THE MIST-SHROUDED BOGS! SUDDENLY...

HOWARD... I... I JUST SAW A... A **BAT** SWOOP DOWN OVER THAT TREE! AND... AND IT WAS **GREEN**!

A **GREEN BAT**? **IMPOSSIBLE**... THERE'S NO SUCH CREATURE, AS FAR AS I KNOW! IT MUST HAVE BEEN YOUR **IMAGINATION**!



WHO ARE YOU... AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING PROWLING AROUND HERE? **ANSWER ME!**

OH!

DON'T SHOUT AT **US**! I'M DR. HOWARD THORNTON OF THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE! WE WERE ASSIGNED TO INVESTIGATE HEALTH CONDITIONS IN CHARVILLE AFTER A DR. CHARRON WROTE ASKING **US**...

WHAT? BUT I DIDN'T ASK FOR ANY **DOCTOR**! I MERELY WANTED THEM TO SEND ME MEDICAL SUPPLIES SO THAT...



AH, FORGIVE ME FOR MY OUTBURST... I'VE LIVED FOR 60 MANY YEARS IN THE SWAMPS THAT I'VE FORGOTTEN MY MANNERS! I AM DR. HENRI CHARRON... AND I'M **DELIGHTED** TO WELCOME YOU TO CHARVILLE! COME... MY CARRIAGE IS JUST BEYOND THIS THICKET!



I HOPE YOU CAN HELP THE POPULATION OF MY LITTLE TOWN! FOR SOME YEARS NOW, THEY'VE ALL BEEN SUFFERING FROM THE SAME DISEASE---A STRANGE FORM OF ANEMIA WHICH LEAVES THEM WEAKENED! I WROTE TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE BECAUSE THEY ALL SEEM TO HAVE BEEN GETTING **WORSE** LATELY!

BUT YOU SEEM TO BE QUITE HEALTHY---DIDN'T THE DISEASE AFFECT YOU?

AND YOU'RE A **DOCTOR**--- WHY COULDN'T YOU HELP THEM?

YES, I **LOOK** HEALTHY, BUT I'M OLDER THAN YOU THINK! I'VE BEEN RETIRED FROM PRACTICE FOR MANY YEARS NOW, BECAUSE OF MY---ER---HEART! AND ANYWAY, NOTHING I DID SEEMED TO HALT THE EPIDEMIC, OR WHATEVER IT IS---ALTHOUGH I MYSELF AM APPARENTLY IMMUNE TO THE DISEASE! MY LONG YEARS IN THE SWAMPS PROBABLY--- AH, BUT THERE IS MY TOWN--- **CHARVILLE!**

IT---IT'S NOTHING BUT A COLLECTION OF RAMSHACKLE, DECAYING **NOVELS!** SURELY NO ONE **LIVES** IN THEM!

AH, BUT THE TOWNSPEOPLE DO---THEY'RE PROBABLY ALL INSIDE! BUT YOU TWO WON'T STAY IN ANY **NOVEL**---YOU'LL BE **MY** GUESTS! THAT'S MY HOME---THAT MANSION AHEAD!

IT'S BEAUTIFUL---BUT SO--- **CREEPY!**

CAN I EXAMINE THE VILLAGERS, DR. CHARRONT? I'D LIKE TO SEE WHAT THEIR SYMPTOMS ARE!

SURELY---I NEED MERELY TOUNG A BELL TO SUMMON THEM HERE!

GOOD LORD---THOSE PEOPLE RESPONDED TO THE GONG AS IF THEY WERE **SLAVES OF CHARRON**---OR WALKING **ZOMBIES**, HYPNOTIZED INTO HIS POWER!

THIS---THIS IS **INCREDIBLE!** THEY'RE ALL SO GAUNT AND PALE---AS IF THEY'RE MORE DEAD THAN ALIVE!

FEEBLE, IRREGULAR
HEARTBEAT---WEAK
RESPIRATION---WAIT!
WHERE DID YOU
GET THOSE PUNCTURE
MARKS ON YOUR
THROAT?

BUT THE VILLAGERS REMAIN
MUTE---AS THOUGH TONGUE-
TIED BY TERROR!

THEY NEVER SEE STRANGERS---
THEY'RE AFRAID OF YOU!
IT'S GETTING LATE---LET
THEM GO HOME!

YOU'VE ALL GOT THOSE PUNCTURES!
WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME HOW YOU GOT
THEM? I WANT TO HELP YOU!

YOU MUST BE WEARY
AFTER YOUR LONG
TRIP---LET ME SHOW
YOU YOUR ROOMS!

HMM, THEY ACT
AS IF THEY'RE
AFRAID OF HIM,
NOT ME!

I GUESS YOU'RE
RIGHT, DR. CHARRON
--I THINK I WILL
RETIRE! I'LL EXAMINE
THEM FURTHER IN THE
MORNING!

AS MIDNIGHT MUFFLES THE ANCIENT, DECREPIT MANSION---

CHARRON MUST BE ASLEEP
---NOW'S THE TIME TO ASK
THE VILLAGERS QUESTIONS!
I'M SURE HE HAS SOME
STRANGE POWER OVER
THEM---THAT MAKES THEM
AFRAID TO TALK IN HIS
PRESENCE!

WE MUSTN'T GO
TO SLEEP TONIGHT
---WE'RE TOO WEAK
TO RISK ANY MORE
---WHA---!

SHHH! I COME AS A FRIEND
---TO HELP YOU! YOU CAN SPEAK
FREELY TO ME NOW- CHARRON
WILL NEVER KNOW I WAS HERE!
YOU'VE GOT TO TELL ME
ABOUT THE HISTORY OF YOUR
STRANGE DISEASE---YOUR
VERY LIVES MAY BE
AT STAKE!

NO, WE DON'T
DARE---EUSTACIA
---SIT DOWN!
DON'T TELL
HIM ANY---

I WILL---SOMEONE'S
GOT TO! I---I CAN'T STAND
IT ANY MORE! YOU'RE THE
FIRST ONE WHO'S EVER
COME FROM THE WORLD
OUTSIDE, OFFERING TO
HELP US! AND WE NEED
HELP! ALL OF US HAVE BEEN
LIKE THIS ALL OUR LIVES---
AND SO WERE OUR PARENTS
---FOR GENERATIONS
BACK! BUT NOW---
IT---IT'S GETTING
WORSE!

BUT HAVEN'T ANY OF
YOU EVER LEFT THIS
HAMLET TO GO TO
THE NEAREST TOWN
AND ASK FOR
MEDICAL HELP?

WE'RE AFRAID TO---THE
GREEN DEVILS WOULD
ATTACK ANYONE WHO TRIED
TO FLEE! FOR OVER A CENTURY
NOW, ACCORDING TO THE OLD
LEGENDS, DR. CHARRON HAS
BEEN WARNING SUCCESSIVE
GENERATIONS OF VILLAGERS
NOT TO LEAVE---

WHAT...HE'S BEEN THREATENING THE VILLAGERS FOR MORE THAN A **CENTURY**? BUT THAT'S **IMPOSSIBLE**... CHARRON COULDN'T BE THAT OLD!

BUT HE **IS**! ACCORDING TO THE OLD LEGENDS, DR. CHARRON CAME HERE AND FOUNDED CHARVILLE IN 1830 ---AND HE'S NOW **170 YEARS OLD**! HE'S IN LEAGUE WITH THE POWERS OF EVIL DARKNESS! HE AND HIS GREEN DEVILS WILL LIVE **FOREVER**...AS LONG AS THEY HAVE **US** TO PREY ON!



SHE...SHE ACTUALLY **BELIEVES** WHAT SHE'S SAYING...SHE'S **MAD**! APPARENTLY THIS STRANGE DISEASE HAS AFFECTED THEIR MINDS...I'LL HAVE TO **NUMOR** HER!

YES, YES, OF **COURSE** CHARRON IS 170 YEARS OLD...MAYBE WE'LL HAVE A BIG BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR HIM TOMORROW...WITH **170 CANDLES**! I---I'M KIND OF SLEEPY...SEE YOU ALL IN THE MORNING!



GREAT GUNS...WHAT A HORDE OF **BATS** FLAPPING AROUND THAT OPEN WINDOW...**WAIT!** THAT... THAT'S THE WINDOW TO SYLVIA'S ROOM!



AND THAT **HUGE** CO---IT...IT'S **MOVING INTO** MY ROOM! I---I'VE GOT TO GET UP THERE **FAST!**



IT'S FEAR THAT POUNDS AT DR. HOWARD THORNTON'S HEART...FEAR OF THE **UNKNOWN**! AND WITHIN SYLVIA'S CHAMBER...AN **UNHOLY SIGHT!**



GREAT...
HEAVENS!

A WHIRRING SOUND FILLS THE ROOM...A RASH OF WINGS THAT FANG THE SUDDENLY FETID AIR...AND...

IT...IT FLEW AWAY...**WHATEVER** IT WAS! BUT SYLVIA...SHE'S LYING THERE SO **STILL**...AS IF...



THANK GOSH...HER PULSE IS SLOW, BUT STEADY...SHE JUST SEEMS TO BE IN AN UNUSUALLY DEEP SLEEP! BUT SHE LOOKS SO...SO **PALE**...SO **DRAWN**...**WAIT**...THOSE MARKS ON HER THROAT!



POOR KID! I'LL JUST KEEP A WIGIL HERE THE REST OF THE NIGHT...WITH THE LIGHT ON...TO MAKE SURE THAT HER REST ISN'T DISTURBED BY ANYTHING!



NEXT MORNING, AS THE RISING SUN SHEDS A CRIMSON GLOW OVER THE AWAKENING SWAMPS...

HOWARD...WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? AND WHY...WHY DO I FEEL SO TIRED...SO WEAK?

ER... YOU CALLED FOR ME IN YOUR SLEEP! I GUESS YOU WERE OVERTIRED FROM THE LONG TRIP!



YOU'D BETTER REST UP IN BED ALL DAY! I'M TAKING A RIDE INTO THE NEAREST TOWN FOR SOME SUPPLIES NOW, BUT I'LL BE BACK IN A FEW HOURS! I'LL LOCK YOUR DOOR BEHIND ME...JUST TO BE SURE!

HURRY BACK! I...I DON'T LIKE BEING ALONE IN THIS CREEPY OLD HOUSE!



I DON'T SUPPOSE CHARRON WOULD LIKE THE IDEA OF MY BORROWING HIS HORSE...BUT I'VE GOT TO GET TO A TELEPHONE AS FAST AS I CAN! SYLVIA OUGHT TO BE SAFE WHILE I'M GONE...BECAUSE **BATS DON'T FLY DURING THE DAYTIME!**



HELLO, CHIEF?...THIS IS THORNTON...I'M CALLING YOU ON A MATTER OF GREAT URGENCY! I'D LIKE YOU TO FIND OUT IF THERE'S A **DR. HENRI CHARRON** LISTED IN THE INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORY OF PHYSICIANS...AND IF HE'S NOT, SEE IF THERE'S ANY RECORD OF THAT NAME IN ANY OF THE NATURALISTS' ENCYCLOPEDIAS FOR THE LAST TWO CENTURIES! I'LL HOLD ON FOR YOUR ANSWER!



MINUTES LATER... HERE'S THE DOPE, HOWARD...NO PHYSICIAN BY THAT NAME HAS EVER BEEN LISTED...BUT THERE WAS A **DR. HENRI CHARRON**...A RENOWNED FRENCH NATURALIST IN THE EARLY 1800'S! HE WAS A GREAT AUTHORITY ON CHIROPTERA...ON **BATS**...AND DISCOVERED A NEW SPECIES OF **GREEN VAMPIRE BATS**, WHICH WAS NAMED **VAMPIRUS CHARRONII** IN HIS HONOR! STRANGELY ENOUGH, THE WHOLE SPECIES SEEMED TO BECOME UTTERLY EXTINCT WHEN HE DIED IN 1832!

BUT HE DIDN'T DIE, CHIEF! LISTEN...HERE'S WHAT YOU'VE GOT TO DO...



LATER...

TOOK ME LONGER TO GET BACK THAN I THOUGHT...THE HORSE WAS TOO TIRED...

HELP!
HELP!





GET AWAY
--HELP!

SYLVIA'S
VOICE! I---I
HOPE I DIDN'T
GET BACK TOO
LATE!



DON'T...
DON'T COME
NEAR ME!

GET AWAY FROM
HER --CHARRON!
YOU HAVE ME TO
DEAL WITH NOW!

CRASH!



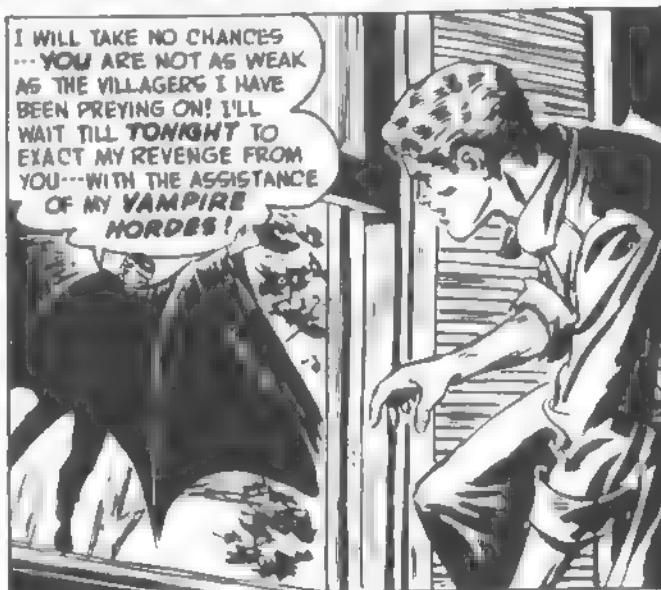
SO...YOU!
HOW DID YOU
KNOW THAT
I...OOF!

NO TIME FOR ANY
PALAVER NOW
YOU VAMPIRE!
BY THE TIME I'M
THROUGH WITH
YOU, YOU'LL---



NO... BY THE TIME
I AM THROUGH WITH
YOU!

WHACK!



I WILL TAKE NO CHANCES
--YOU ARE NOT AS WEAK
AS THE VILLAGERS I HAVE
BEEN PREYING ON! I'LL
WAIT TILL TONIGHT TO
EXACT MY REVENGE FROM
YOU--WITH THE ASSISTANCE
OF MY VAMPIRE
HORDES!



YOU PROBABLY THOUGHT THE
GIRL WOULD BE SAFE WHEN
YOU LEFT, BECAUSE BATS DO
NOT FLY BY DAY-- BUT YOU
FORGOT ABOUT ME! MY VAMPIRE
PETS MUST WAIT FOR DUSK, BUT I
CAN CHANGE INTO THE VAMPIRE
FORM AT WILL--AT ANY TIME! YES,
I HAVE LEARNED MANY OF THE
SECRETS OF THE UNKNOWN
SINCE THAT DAY WHEN MY
MORTAL BODY DIED--AND
I WAS REBORN AS AN
ETERNAL VAMPIRE!



SECRETLY, I BROUGHT ALL THE EXISTING SPECIMENS
OF VAMPYRUS CHARRONII TO THIS ISOLATED
SWAMP--AND FOUNDED THE VILLAGE OF
CHARVILLE IN 1832! FOUR GENERATIONS OF
HUMANS MY PETS AND I HAVE PREYED ON--
WHILE WE KILLED THOSE WHO TRIED TO
ESCAPE AND FRIGHTENED OTHER LOCAL
FOOLS AWAY FROM CHARVILLE!



BUT LATELY MY VAMPIRE HORDES GREW TOO NUMEROUS. WHILE THIS GENERATION OF VILLAGERS WASTED AWAY! I CALLED UPON THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE FOR RESTORATIVES FOR OUR VICTIMS! I NEVER DREAMED THEY WOULD SEND A **DOCTOR** DOWN HERE---AND NOW THAT I MUST KILL YOU TO KEEP MY SECRET, I MUST ALSO DESTROY THE WHOLE VILLAGE---FOR SEARCH PARTIES WILL SURELY COME TO INVESTIGATE YOUR DIS-APPEARANCE!



TONIGHT, AFTER OUR WORK IS DONE, I AND MY VAMPIRES WILL FLY TO ANOTHER ISOLATED AREA, TO FOUND **ANOTHER** CHARVILLE---AND STOCK IT WITH **OTHER PREY!** FAREWELL, MORTALS ---WE MEET AGAIN AT DUSK!

OH, HOWARD ---WHAT'LL WE DO?

JUST WAIT AND PRAY---AND WATCH THE SKIES!



AFTER HOURS OF TENSE WAITING---

LOOK! THAT PLANE---IT---IT'S FLYING OVER US SO LOW!

YES, AND IF IT'S THE PLANE I THINK IT IS, IT'LL SOON BE DROPPING US A **PRESENT!**



IT DROPPED A **PARACHUTE!** WHAT'S IN THAT BOX? ..

NO TIME FOR QUESTIONS NOW! GO TELL ALL THE VILLAGERS TO GET OUT HERE---IN A HURRY!



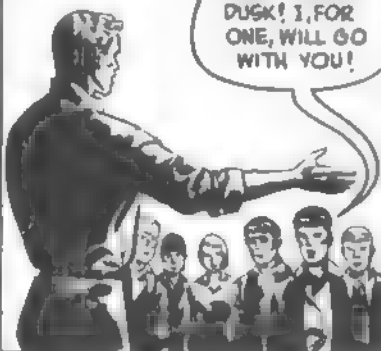
TEN MINUTES LATER---

HOWARD--- I GOT THEM OUT! THEY'RE ALL HERE!

GOOD! AND MY LITTLE DEVICE IS ALL HERE ---READY FOR ACTION!

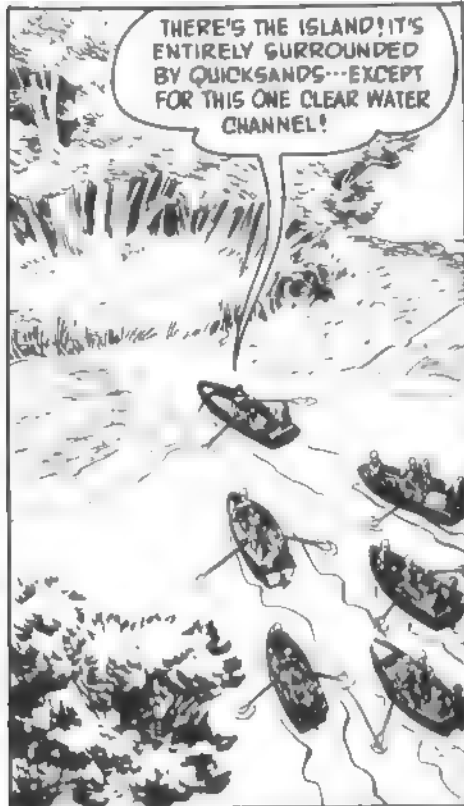
LISTEN TO ME---ALL OF YOU---YOUR VERY LIVES DEPEND ON IT! YOU'RE ALL LEAVING CHARVILLE, FOR **GOOD!** YOU NEEDN'T BE AFRAID OF CHARRON'S VENGEANCE---BECAUSE I HAVE A DEVICE HERE THAT CAN **TAKE CARE OF HIM!** IF YOU STAY HERE, WE'LL KILL YOU ALL! WE MUST GO TO A SMALL ISLAND JUST ABOUT LARGE ENOUGH TO HOLD ALL OF US ---AND PREFERABLY IN A **QUICKSAND AREA!** IS THERE SUCH A PLACE NEAR HERE?

AYE... NOT FAR -- WE CAN GET THERE JUST BEFORE DUSK! I, FOR ONE, WILL GO WITH YOU!



WE'LL ALL GO---**ANYTHING** IS BETTER THAN THIS LIVING DEATH! TO THE BOATS, VILLAGERS!

THAT'S THE SPIRIT!



THERE'S THE ISLAND! IT'S ENTIRELY SURROUNDED BY QUICKSANDS...EXCEPT FOR THIS ONE CLEAR WATER CHANNEL!



MINUTES LATER...
HOWARD --LOOK! THOSE THOSE THINGS IN THE DISTANCE! THEY LOOK LIKE BATS...COMING TOWARDS US!

WHEW...WE GOT HERE NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON! LUCKY THIS LITTLE GADGET IS RARIN' TO GO --I'M READY FOR THEM!



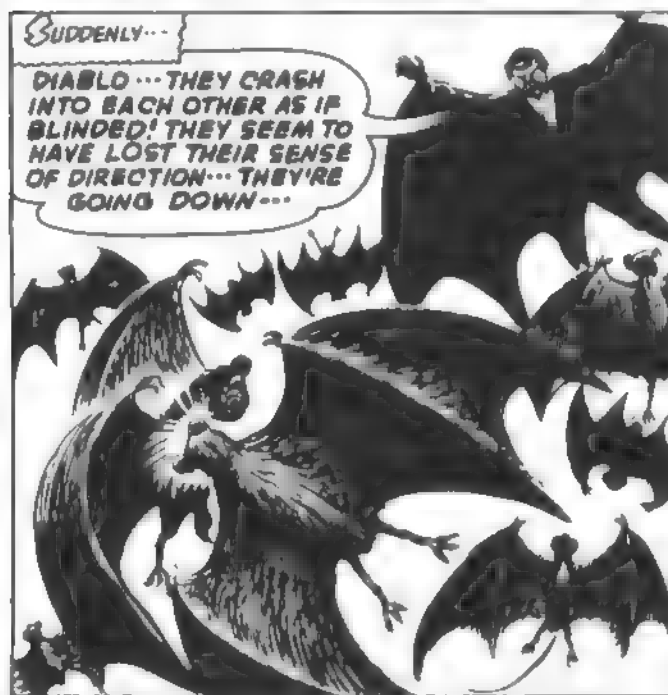
THE FOOLS THOUGHT THEY COULD ESCAPE US...AND NOW... TO THE ATTACK!



NOT ONE MUST BE LEFT! GET THEM!

COME ON, YOU FIENDS...WE'RE READY AND WAITING!

WOOO-OOO!



SUDDENLY...

DIABLO...THEY CRASH INTO EACH OTHER AS IF BLINDED! THEY SEEM TO HAVE LOST THEIR SENSE OF DIRECTION...THEY'RE GOING DOWN...



THEY...THEY'RE ALL PLUNGING INTO THE QUICKSANDS! HOWARD... YOU DID IT!

NOT YET... THERE'S STILL CHARRON!



MY PETS...THEY
DROWNED! THEY'RE
GONE...ALL MY BLOOD-
BROTHERS, ALL MY KIN! BUT
I...I WILL AVENGE
THEIR
DEATHS!



THAT'S IT,
CHARRON...
**COME RIGHT
INTO MY
BEAM!**

MY...MY SENSE OF DIRECTION...
IT'S **GONE!** I...I CAN'T STAY
ALOFT...CAN'T TELL WHERE I'M
HEADING! MY HUMAN EYES ARE
USELESS AS LONG AS I'M STILL
A VAMPIRE...I **MUST CHANGE
BACK INTO HUMAN FORM**
--- TO SEE WHERE I AM!



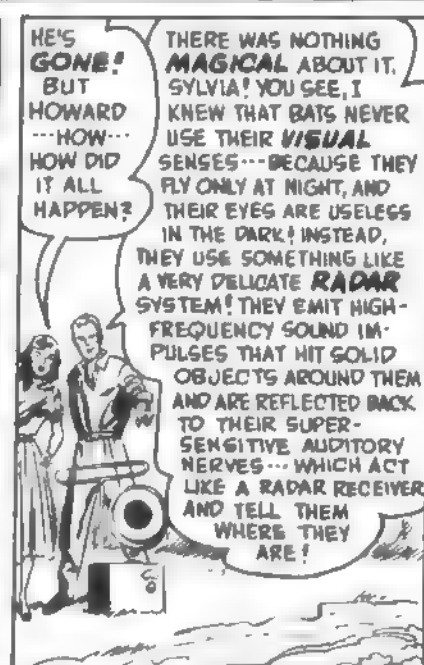
THE TRANSFORMATION IS SUDDEN...
BUT TOO LATE!

THE QUICKSANDS!
I CAN SEE NOW...
BUT I CANNOT
FLY!



YAGH!

SPLASH!



HE'S
GONE!
BUT
HOWARD
...HOW...
HOW DID
IT ALL
HAPPEN?

THERE WAS NOTHING
MAGICAL ABOUT IT,
SYLVIA! YOU SEE, I
KNEW THAT BATS NEVER
USE THEIR **VISUAL**
SENSES...BECAUSE THEY
FLY ONLY AT NIGHT, AND
THEIR EYES ARE USELESS
IN THE DARK! INSTEAD,
THEY USE SOMETHING LIKE
A VERY DELICATE **RADAR**
SYSTEM! THEY EMIT HIGH-
FREQUENCY SOUND IM-
PULSES THAT HIT SOLID
OBJECTS AROUND THEM
AND ARE REFLECTED BACK
TO THEIR SUPER-
SENSITIVE AUDITORY
NERVES...WHICH ACT
LIKE A RADAR RECEIVER
AND TELL THEM
WHERE THEY
ARE!



BUT I KNEW THAT IF THEIR SOUND
WAVES WERE **JAMMED** BY A MORE
POWERFUL SOURCE, THEY'D GO UTTERLY
"**BLIND**"! SO I ASKED THE CHIEF TO
PHONE THE NEAREST ARMY AIR BASE,
GIVE THEM OUR LOCATION...AND HAVE
THEM DROP ME A POWERFUL, PORTABLE
SUPERSONIC OSCILLATOR THAT COULD
EMIT A BEAM OF SOUND AT 100,000
CYCLES...AND UTTERLY DROWN OUT
THE SOUNDS THE VAMPIRES NEEDED
TO "**SEE**" AND FLY WITH!



YES, CHARRON AND HIS
VAMPIRES HAD ALL THE
ANCIENT, FENDISH LORE
OF DEMONOLOGY AT THEIR
COMMAND, BUT **MODERN
SCIENCE** CONQUERED
THEM...JUST AS IT WILL
CONQUER SICKNESS...
AND RESTORE THESE
GOOD VILLAGERS TO
HEALTHY, HAPPY
LIVES!

KILLERS FROM HELL

YEAH, BOY-- I'M ON TOP OF THE WORLD!
THE FANCIEST GAMBLING JOINT IN
MACAO... EVERYTHING FROM
ROULETTE TO FAN-TAN... AND A
BEAUTIFUL DISH LIKE WILLOW TO
HELP ME COUNT THE DOUGH
THAT'S ROLLING IN!



It's a ten-to-one bet -- as
Frank Wiley would say-- that
you've never even heard of
MACAO! It's a Portuguese-
controlled city on the south
China coast -- a wide-open
headquarters for smugglers
and gunmen... and **COMMU-
NIST SPIES**! Frank Wiley ran
a gambling house in Macao...
and he never gave a sucker
a break... until he played
his last long shot to save
TWENTY AGAINST TERROR!

YES, THE DOUGH KEPT ROLLING IN-- BUT SOME-
TIMES THE LOSERS DIDN'T LIKE IT!

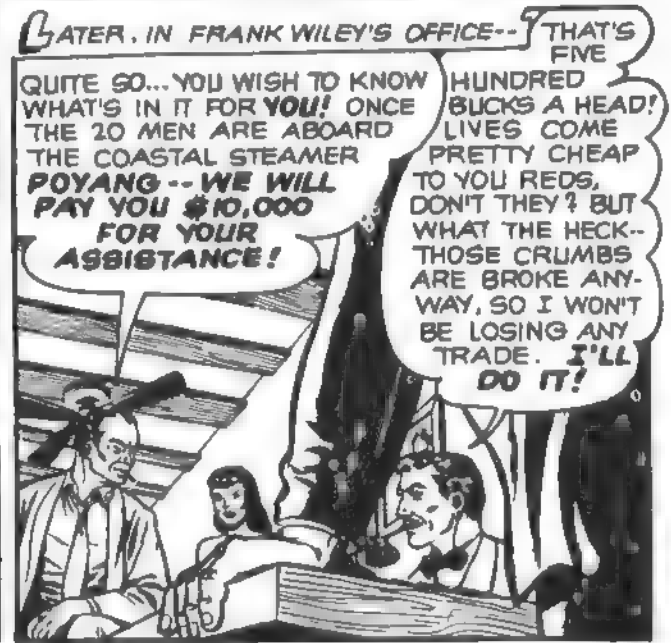
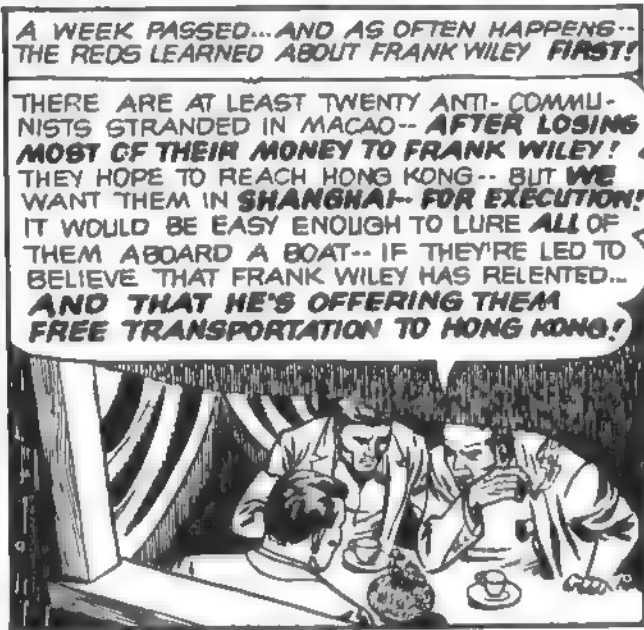
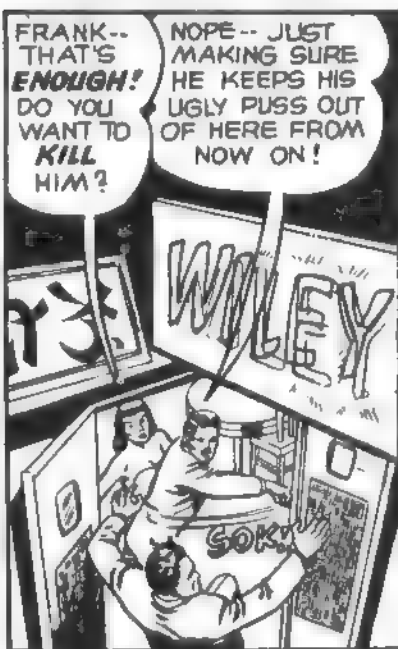
MR WILEY, PLEASE-- GIVE
ME BACK \$400 I JUST
LOST! THE CHINESE
COMMUNISTS ARE
AFTER ME-- I
NEED THE MONEY
TO GET TO
HONG KONG!

YEAH, I GET DOZENS
OF GUYS LIKE YOU
EVERY WEEK-- THROW-
ING AWAY THE MONEY
YOU SAVED TO ESCAPE
FROM THE REDS! BUT I
NEVER GIVE A SUCKER
A BREAK, BUD -- IT'D
BE BAD FOR
BUSINESS!

WILEY--
I WANT
MY
MONEY!

FRANK
--LOOK
OUT!





WILLOW WAITED UNTIL THE COMMUNIST AGENTS LEFT-- AND THEN--

I NEVER RATED YOUR CHARACTER VERY HIGH, FRANK-- BUT THIS'LL BE THE FIRST TIME YOU'VE DONE ANYTHING **CROOKED--** AND TO HELP THOSE ROTTEN COMMUNISTS!

COME ON, WILLOW, DON'T HAND ME THAT GUFF! I DON'T PICK AND CHOOSE BETWEEN COMMUNIST DOUGH AND ANTI-COMMUNIST DOUGH-- **AS LONG AS I GET IT!**



NEXT DAY-- QUIT THANKING ME, WONG... I MANAGED TO CHARTER THE SHIP CHEAP-- SO I FIGURED WHY NOT HELP YOU GUYS GET TO HONG KONG? YEAH, YEAH-- I KNOW HOW MUCH IT'LL MEAN TO YOUR FAMILY! OKAY, THE **POYANG** SAILS AT NINE O'CLOCK TONIGHT-- **HAVE A NICE TRIP, WONG!**



WELL, BABY, THAT WINDS UP THE LIST! TWENTY SUCKERS WHO DIDN'T KNOW ENOUGH TO HANG ON TO THEIR DOUGH-- AND, BABY, THEY'RE **STILL** SUCKERS! ALL OF THEM ON THE COMMUNIST BLACKLIST-- AND THEY'RE TOO DUMB TO SEE ANYTHING PHONY ABOUT A FREE BOAT RIDE TO HONG KONG!

FRANK... THIS CABLE JUST CAME! YOU'D BETTER-- READ IT!



TRANS-PACIFIC CABLE

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE REGRETS TO INFORM YOU, AS NEAREST OF KIN, THAT CPL. ROBERT WILEY WAS KILLED IN ACTION IN VIETNAM LAST WEEK.

I'M SORRY, FRANK! I NEVER KNEW YOU **HAD** A BROTHER-- LET ALONE ONE WHO WAS FIGHTING IN VIETNAM

BOB WAS NEARLY TEN YEARS YOUNGER THAN ME-- SO WE WEREN'T VERY CLOSE! BUT THERE'S A KID WHO HAD THE MAKINGS OF A TERRIFIC POKER-PLAYER-- **AND HE HAD TO BE JERK ENOUGH TO ENLIST!**



TEN YEARS YOUNGER THAN YOU-- THAT WOULD MAKE HIM ABOUT **NINETEEN!** HE HAD HIS LIFE **AHEAD** OF HIM... UNTIL HE GOT A FREE BOAT RIDE- **VIET NAM!** WONDER IF HE KNEW WHICH SIDE **YOU'RE** ON, FRANK?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I TOLD YOU ONCE BEFORE I DON'T **TAKE SIDES--** I'VE GOT TOO MUCH ON THE BALL TO WORRY ABOUT **COMMUNISM!**



SURE, THE GREAT FRANK WILEY HAS EVERYTHING! EVERYTHING BUT **GUTS!**

TAKE IT EASY, WILLOW!



I MUST SAY **YOU'RE** TAKING IT EASY -- AFTER LEARNING YOUR BROTHER'S BEEN KILLED BY THE REDS WHO ARE PAYING YOU \$10,000 FOR A DOUBLE-CROSS! **TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS...** LIVES COME PRETTY CHEAP TO SOME **AMERICANS**, DON'T THEY?



NINETEEN YEARS OLD YES, HE **MIGHT** HAVE BEEN A POKER-PLAYER--OR A LAWYER--OR EVEN A WORTHLESS BRUTE THAT SOME WOMAN COULDN'T HELP LOVING! I'LL BET HE **DID** HAVE A GIRL FRIEND, FRANK-- BACK IN THE STATES!

KNOCK IT OFF, SWEETHEART-- **SKIP IT!**



BUT FRANK WILEY COULDN'T SKIP IT! EVEN A POKER PLAYER CAN'T BLUFF **HIMSELF**-- ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE **THIS!**

MAYBE SHE'S **RIGHT**-- MAYBE IT'S BEEN A QUESTION OF **GUTS!** A CROOKED DEAL, SHE CALLED IT BUT **THAT** WAS LETTING ME OFF EASY! IT'S TEN THOUSAND BUCKS IN **BLOOD** MONEY-- AND IT'S MY BROTHER'S BLOOD! I **CAN'T** GO THROUGH WITH IT!



FRANK, IT'S SUICIDE TO **TELL** THE REDS YOU'RE BACK-ING OUT! JUST **WARN** THOSE TWENTY ANTI-COMMUNISTS TO **STAY AWAY** FROM THE **POYANG!**

WHAT DO YOU TAKE ME FOR-- A WELSHER? ANY TIME FRANK WILEY DOESN'T FOLLOW THROUGH WITH A DEAL-- THE OTHER GUYS ARE GOING TO KNOW **WHY!** SURE, I'LL WARN THOSE SUCKERS-- BUT IT'LL BE DONE OPENLY-- **WITH MY CARDS ON THE TABLE!**



DON'T DO IT FRANK-- THEY'LL KILL YOU!

MAYBE! I HEAR IT'S HAPPENING EVERY DAY-- IN PLACES LIKE **VIETNAM**



YEAH-- THAT'S WHAT I SAID! I'VE **CHANGED MY MIND!** KEEP YOUR TEN GRAND-- BECAUSE I WANT TO SEE THOSE TWENTY GUYS **REACH** HONG KONG!



IN OTHER WORDS-- YOU'RE SYMPATHIZING WITH THE ENEMIES OF RED CHINA! YOU'VE PUT YOURSELF IN A DANGEROUS POSITION, WILEY-- **AND YOU'RE GOING TO REGRET IT!**



MACAO'S GOING TO BE TOO CHANCY FROM NOW ON, BABY-- **WE'D** BETTER DO A FADE TO HONG KONG OURSELVES! CLEAN OUT THE SAFE AND CLOSE MY BANK ACCOUNT-- AND MEET ME WITH THE DOUGH IN EXACTLY ONE HOUR ... **IN THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE ON CHENYU ROAD!**

BUT, FRANK-- WHERE ARE YOU GOING?



WONG IS THE BIG WHEEL OF THE ANTI-COMMUNIST REFUGEES-- BUT **PHONING** HIM WOULDN'T SOUND CONVINCING! I'VE GOT TO SEE HIM **PERSONALLY**-- AND **MAKE SURE THAT HE TIPS OFF THE OTHERS!**

FRANK... DO YOU THINK IT'S POSSIBLE FOR A GIRL TO BE **PROUD** OF A WORTHLESS BRUTE?

DARLING-- BE CAREFUL!

SURE, BABY! CHENYU ROAD -- IN ONE HOUR!

FRANK WILEY HAD SPENT 4 YEARS IN MACAO-- 4 YEARS OF PLEASANT LIVING AND EASY FRIENDSHIPS! BUT NOW, ANY STRANGER-- ANY SHADOWED DOORWAY-- MIGHT HOLD THE MENACE OF DEATH!

I'M BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND WHAT BOB WENT THROUGH IN VIET NAM. **WONDERING EVERY SECOND WHEN YOU'RE GOING TO GET IT!**

MINUTES LATER, AS FRANK TURNS A CORNER NEAR THE WATERFRONT--

WONG! HOLD IT, BOY-- I WAS JUST COMING TO SEE YOU!

NO-- NOT HERE! I SAW THREE MEN KEEPING A CLOSE WATCH ON MY PLACE -- SO I SLIPPED OUT THE BACK DOOR! THEY'RE AFTER ME, WILEY -- I'VE GOT TO BOARD THE **POYANG NOW!**

LOOK, WONG-- THAT **POYANG** ANGLE WAS A PHONY STEER-- **A COMMUNIST TRAP!** YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND THE OTHERS -- TELL 'EM TO STAY OFF THAT SHIP-- **UNLESS THEY WANT A ONE WAY RIDE TO A SHANGHAI FIRING SQUAD!**

WATCH OUT!

IN THE NEXT INSTANT, FRANK WILEY SAW WONG DART TO SAFETY-- FELT HIS HAND GROPE FOR THE GUN INSIDE HIS COAT-- AND THE JARRING THUD OF A BULLET!

HE SAW THEM COMING, LIKE JACKALS CLOSING IN FOR THE KILL-- AND HIS ONE THOUGHT WAS TO **LIVE**-- LONG ENOUGH TO SETTLE HIS ACCOUNTS!

CHENYU ROAD... I'VE GOTTA GET THERE... GOTTA MEET WILLOW!

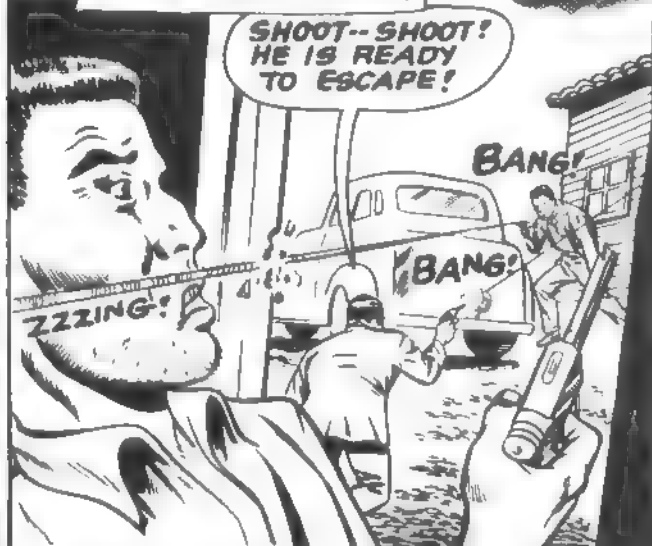
CAREFUL -- THE DOG IS ARMED!

BANG!

SUDDENLY, FRANK WILEY'S MIND CLEARED, AND HE SAW HIMSELF FOR WHAT HE WAS... AN AMERICAN... A FIGHTER... FACED BY THE ENEMY!



CONFUSED BY THE CRASHING GUNFIRE, A PASSING TAXI DRIVER SLOWED DOWN-- JUST LONG ENOUGH!



THE CAR DOOR YANKED OPEN-- AND IN MID-LEAP-- FRANK WILEY CAUGHT A SLUG IN THE PIT OF HIS STOMACH!



FOR A SECOND, HE TASTED ONLY PAIN AND BITTER DEFEAT... HE HEARD THE THUMP OF RUNNING FEET, AND WITH A LAST DIZZY EFFORT HE CLAWED HIS WAY IN-- AND SHOUTED TO THE PANICKY DRIVER--



BUDDHIST TEMPLE-- CHENYU ROAD!



IT WAS QUIET IN THE TEMPLE! THE ANCIENT GODS SAT IN THE COOL SHADOWS, HEEDLESS OF THINGS LIKE WAR AND TYRANNY... OR THE TRICKLING LIFE BLOOD OF A GAMBLER NAMED FRANK WILEY!



IT WAS TEN MINUTES OF AGONY TEN MINUTES WITH THE FIERY BITE OF A BLOWTORCH AGAINST HIS BODY... AND HIS BRAIN WHIRLING IN DELIRIUM! "THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE," A VOICE SEEMED TO INTONE, "REGRETS TO INFORM YOU... REGRETS... REGRETS..."



A SWIFT FORM DARTED BY THE IDOLS-- AND THEN FRANK WILEY KNEW THAT THE LAST MOMENTS WOULDN'T BE WITH PAIN AND FEAR -- BUT WITH **HER!**

FRANK--WHAT DID THEY DO TO YOU? YOU'RE DYING!

I...I KNOW, WILLOW... BUT THOSE TWENTY CHINESE WONG GOT IN TOUCH WITH... WILL LIVE! 20 TO 1, BABY-- EVEN THE REDS OUGHTA KNOW THAT'S A SUCKER'S ODDS!

NO, FRANK-- YOU'VE GOT TO HANG ON! DON'T DIE -- DON'T!

HONEY, I HAVEN'T MUCH TIME-- **LISTEN!** MY RECORDS SHOW HOW MUCH THOSE REFUGEES DROPPED IN MY GAMBLING JOINT-- **PAY'EM BACK...**

ENOUGH TO MAKE THE HONG KONG PLANE! THE REST IS FOR YOU... AND TAKE MY ADVICE... FALL IN LOVE WITH A DECENT GUY THE NEXT TIME!



AT THAT MOMENT--

IF LOW-BORN DRIVER OF TAXI MA-42-X TOLD TRUTH-- HE IS **HERE!** EITHER DEAD-- OR WAITING FOR THE MERCY OF DEATH!

FRANK-- THEY'RE COMING!

THOSE YELLOW RATS AREN'T GOING TO WATCH **ME** DIE! REMEMBER WHAT I SAID, BABY-- THAT WHEN YOU WANTED TO GET RID OF ME... YOU'D HAVE TO PLUG **ME YOURSELF?**

FRANK-- OH, FRANK! I CAN'T-- I **CAN'T...** DO YOU WANT **THEM** TO DO IT-- **THEIR WAY?** MAKE IT FAST, SWEETHEART-- DON'T LET THEM GET **YOU!** AND KINDEST REGARDS --TO HONG KONG!



The ANCIENT GODS LOOKED DOWN. THEY HAD HEARD DIVINE THUNDERS AND THE ROAR OF DEMONS... WHAT DID THE SHARP CRACK OF A SMALL AUTOMATIC MEAN TO **THEM?**



Frank Wiley was dead... but the girl he loved would live-- the Twenty against Terror would live-- and the spirit of **FREE-DOM** for which brave men gave their lives... yes, **THAT WILL LIVE!** THAT much Frank Wiley knew wasn't a gamble-- it was a sure thing-- and he played it to ...**THE END!**

When the SHAMAN WALKED



DID YOU EVER GET THE FEELING, IN A MUSEUM OR CLOTHING SHOP, THAT THE STARING DUMMIES HAD A SECRET SPARK OF LIFE? IF SO... YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHAT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT IN THE DARKENED SHOWROOM OF A THEATRICAL COSTUME COMPANY... WHEN TWO TERROR-WREAKING OUTLAWS CAME TO FACE TO FACE WITH THE TERROR OF THE SUPER-NATURAL!

John Belfi

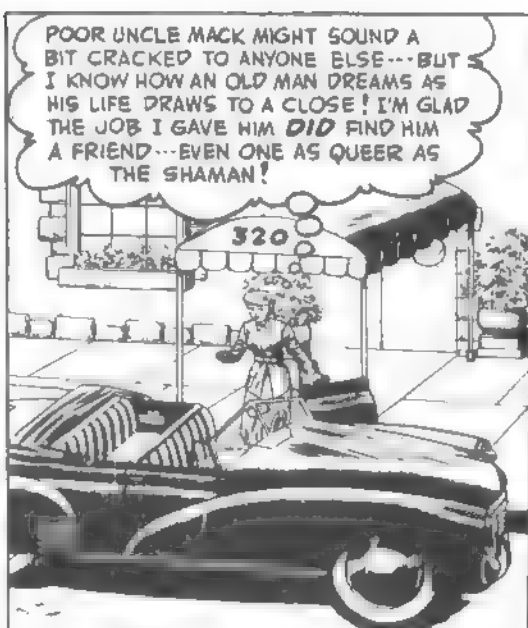
IT MAY SOUND DAFFY... BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THAT HEATHEN COOT THAT MAKES ME THINK OF THE HUGE FORESTS OF SIBERIA... AND THOSE PURPLE NORTHERN LIGHTS! SORT OF A SYMBOL OF THE FAR-OFF PLACES I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE! SURE, THE SHAMAN'S JUST A DUMMY... BUT WHO KNOWS?

YEP... SOMETIMES HE SEEMS TO BE THINKING OF THOSE WIDE GREY STEPPES... HALF A WORLD AWAY! HE'S LONELY... AND THAT'S WHY LATE AT NIGHT I SOMETIMES TALK TO HIM... AND GET THE IDEA HE'S LISTENING!

AND THEN I THINK THAT SOME DAY SOON HE'LL BE GOING BACK TO THE PLACE THAT'S ALWAYS HALF DAYLIGHT... AND I GET THE STRANGEST NOTION I'LL BE GOING WITH HIM... A LONG, LONG WAY!

MAYBE I SHOULDN'T TELL YOU THIS, UNCLE MACK... BUT SHAMANS ARE GREATLY FEARED IN SIBERIA! THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO BE WIZARDS WHO ARE NEVER COMPLETELY ALIVE NOR WHOLLY DEAD... EXISTING ENDLESSLY IN THE OUTER WORLD OF SPIRITS!





THE EVENING SKY FADES INTO A BLACK CUSHION FOR THE TWINKLING SKYSCRAPERS... AND UNCLE MACK SITS IN THE HALF DARK SHOWROOM... FACING THE SHADOWED FIGURE OF THE SHAMAN! IT ALMOST SEEMS ALIVE... WITH POINTS OF LIGHT GLEAMING IN ITS SIGHTLESS EYES... AND ON THE LITTLE BELLS DANGLING FROM ITS BLOODLESS LIMBS!



INTO A PATCH OF FEEBLE LIGHT FALLING FROM THE TRANSOM...

WHAT DID YOU WANT TO DO THAT FOR? DO YOU HAVE TO GET YOURSELF IN TROUBLE...LESS THAN AN HOUR AFTER BUSTING OUT OF THE PEN?

DID I KNOW HE WAS REACHING FOR THE LIGHT SWITCH? I THOUGHT IT WAS A BURGLAR ALARM!



HE'S STILL BREATHING! WHAT'S HE STARING AT THAT THING FOR...THAT FREAK WITH THE LITTLE BELLS?

COME ON--SNAP OUT OF IT! LET'S DITCH THESE CONVICT OUTFITS--AND FIND OURSELVES SOME CLOTHES!



A MOMENT LATER...

THEY'RE NOT MUCH FOR FIT--BUT THEY'LL KEEP THE COPS OFF OUR TRAIL UNTIL WE'VE REACHED THAT BACK-ROAD'S FARMHOUSE I MENTIONED!

WHAT'S THAT?



THEN A VOICE SOUNDS--ABOVE THE RIPPLING CHIME OF SILVER BELLS!

IT'S THAT OLD CROCK! WHO'S HE TALKING TO, CHARLEY--WHO?

I HEARD THEM RING, SHAMAN...I HEARD YOU MOVE! AND NOW I GUESS--WE'LL BE HEADING FOR--THE NORTHERN LIGHTS!



THAT THING MOVE? THE OLD BOY WAS TALKING STRICTLY FROM DELIRIUM!

BUT DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT WE HEARD, CHARLEY? BELLS... LITTLE BELLS... JUST LIKE THEM!

YOU CAN'T TELL ME THAT'S AN ORDINARY DUMMY! I KNOW WHEN I'M BEING WATCHED AND LISTENED TO--AND I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE!

AND SO THE TWO CONVICTS HURRY TO THEIR CAR--EACH WITH THE SECRET THOUGHT THAT NOW THEY ARE RUNNING FROM MORE THAN THE POLICE! IT'S SOMETHING THEY LEFT BACK THERE--AND SOMETHING THEY MAY MEET AGAIN--ANYWHERE!



MEANWHILE---WINNIE STIRS---HAUNTED BY A TROUBLED DREAM!



I'VE NEVER HAD A DREAM AFFECT ME LIKE **THIS** BEFORE! I KNOW I SHOULDN'T BE WORRIED BY UNCLE MACK'S SAYING HE EXPECTED TO BE GOING SOMEWHERE WITH THE SHAMAN--- BUT I WON'T REST EASILY UNTIL I'VE PHONED HIM!



A MINUTE PASSES---TWO MINUTES---THE UNANSWERED BUZZ SENDING A SWIRL OF DREAD THROUGH WINNIE'S MIND!

NOW I KNOW SOMETHING'S WRONG! MAYBE--- IF I HURRY---I CAN GET TO THE SHOWROOM IN TIME TO HELP!



AT THAT MOMENT---AS THE TWO CONVICTS REACH THE EDGE OF TOWN---

WAIT'LL YOU SEE THAT FARM--- YOU'LL GET RID OF YOUR WHAMMIES THERE, CHUM! QUIET LITTLE PLACE---WITH A BROOK PLINKING AND GURLING RIGHT OUTSIDE THE DOOR!

IT'LL STILL BE DARK WHEN WE GET THERE! YOU GOT LIGHTS IN THAT DUMP?



SURE---**GAS!** KIND OF OLD-FASHIONED---BUT NO USE BEING CHOOSY WHEN WE'RE TRYING TO COVER UP OUR TRACKS! WHICH REMINDS ME---WE MIGHT AS WELL CHUCK OUR PRISON DENIMS INTO THE BUSHES! LET'S HAVE 'EM!

CHARLEY---DIDN'T YOU PICK UP THOSE DUDDS WHEN WE CHANGED?



OF ALL THE FAT-HEADED TRICKS! YOU'RE THE ONE WHO GOT SCARED BY BELLS AND THE DEVIL KNOWS WHAT---RUNNING OUT AND LEAVING THOSE DENIMS RIGHT WHERE THEY CAN PUT THE FINGER ON US IF WE'RE EVER CAUGHT!

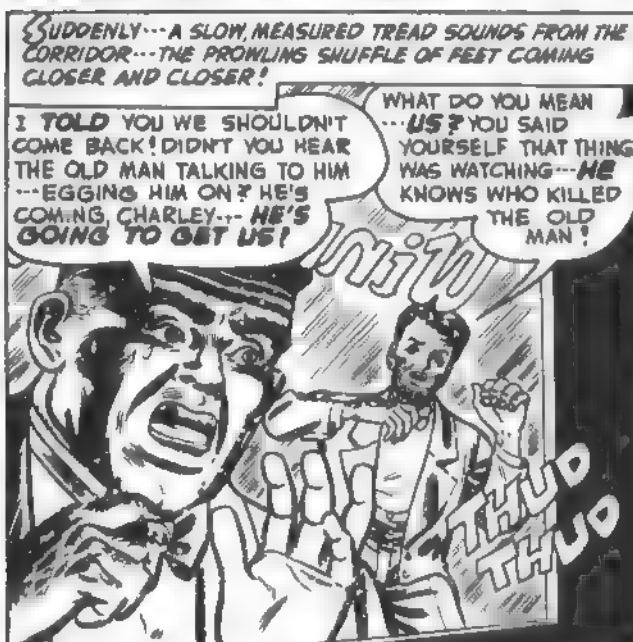
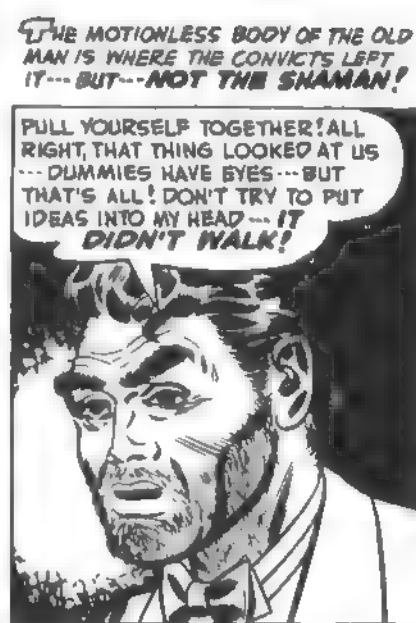
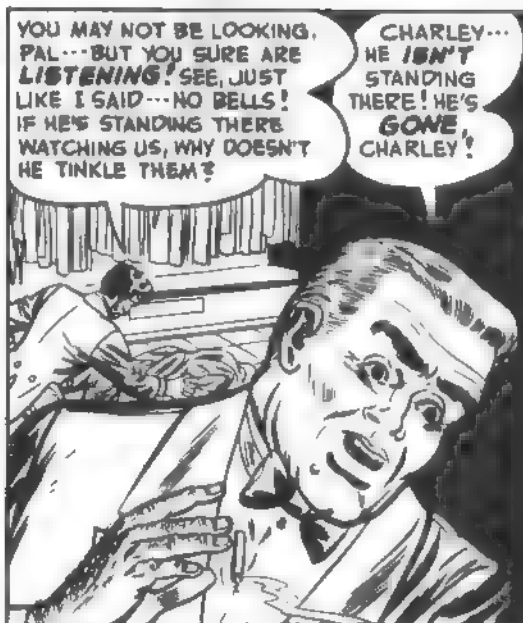
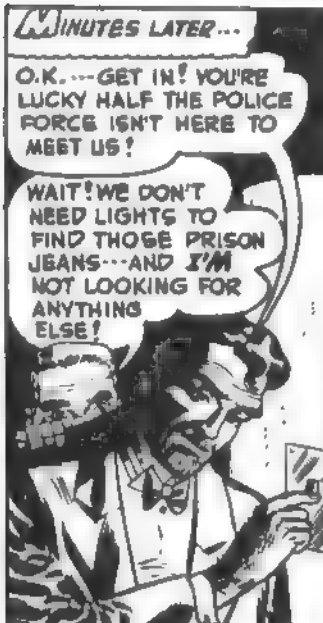


AS CHARLEY SWINGS THE CAR AROUND---

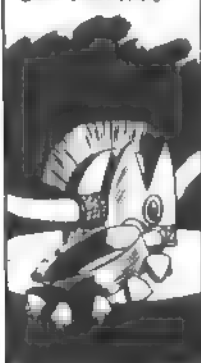
WE'RE NOT GOING TO GET CAUGHT, CHARLEY! LET THE COPS FIND THOSE DENIMS---SO WHAT?

I KNOW JUST WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND---BUT SKIP IT! BELLS OR NO BELLS---WE'RE GOING BACK!





QUICKLY THE CONVICTS DRIVE OFF WITH THEIR CAPTIVE... AS IF TO HIDE THE FACT THAT THEY ARE THE CAPTIVES... OF FEAR!



HOW COULD YOU HAVE DONE IT? A HARMLESS OLD MAN... SO LONELY HE'D SPEND THE NIGHT TALKING TO THAT LIFELESS FIGURE ABOUT GOING PLACES... JUST AS IF IT WERE A FRIEND!

THEY WENT PLACES, ALL RIGHT! I'M NOT SURE ABOUT THE OLD MAN... BUT THAT CREEP WITH THE BELLS TOOK A POWDER SOMEWHERE!



FROM FAR OFF...UNCLE MACK'S VOICE BOUNCES IN WINNIE'S MIND!

YOU MEAN THE SHAMAN'S... **GONE?**

YES, MA'AM...SOMEDAY SOON HE'LL BE GOING BACK...BACK TO THE PLACE THAT'S ALWAYS HALF DAYLIGHT!



AN HOUR LATER... WITH A CLAMMY DAWN MIST DRIFTING OVER THE MEADOWS...



WELL...HERE IT IS, CHUM...JUST AS I LEFT IT! HEAR THAT BROOK TINKLING DOWN THERE AMONG THE ROCKS?

WAIT... WAIT!



TINKLE TINKLE

WITH A SUDDEN STAB OF FEAR...

CHARLEY...DID YOU EVER HEAR A BROOK RING...OR CHIME? WHEN SOMETHING TINKLES, CHARLEY...IT'S BELLS!

DON'T START THAT AGAIN... PUTTING A JINX ON US THE MINUTE WE GET HERE! STRIKE A MATCH...WE'RE GOING INSIDE!



LET'S HAVE THOSE MATCHES! YOU'RE SO STIR-HAPPY, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING!



I KNOW WHAT I'M NOT DOING...I'M NOT GOING IN! LISTEN TO THOSE BELLS...SWISHING BACK AND FORTH WHILE HE HOPS AROUND...WAITING!

READY TO COVER UP BY PLUGGING ME, EH? GIVE ME THAT GUN!



JUMPING BACK...WINNIE HAS A SPLIT-SECOND GLIMPSE OF THE ROOM...FEBLY LIT BY THE SPUTTERING MATCH FLAME...

IN THE SAME SPLIT-SECOND...THE SHAMAN TOWERS AT THE EDGE OF DARKNESS...TERRIBLY ALIVE!



THEY'RE NOT ALONE! THERE'S SOMETHING **ELSE** INSIDE... MOVING OUT OF THE SHADOWS!

TINKLE
TINKLE



IT WASN'T ME! YOU WERE THERE... YOU KNOW IT WASN'T ME!

Then...BOTH SHAMAN AND DARKNESS DISSOLVE IN A FLARING BLAST!



When Winnie Revives...

GOOD THING THOSE TWO CONS DIDN'T GET YOU INSIDE! ABOUT THE QUICKEST WAY TO GET BLOWN APART IS TO LIGHT A MATCH... **WHEN THERE'S BEEN A SLOW GAS LEAK FOR SEVERAL YEARS!**

THOSE MEN WHO SHOT UNCLE MACK... **THEY WERE INSIDE!**

GAS LEAK! NO WONDER I WAS KNOCKED OUT!

AND THEN SOME! WHEN WE PULLED UP, YOU WERE SITTING THERE STARING UP AT THE SKY...MUMBLED SOMETHING ABOUT UNCLE MACK AND A GUY NAMED SHAMAN... **WALKING TOGETHER TOWARD THE NORTHERN LIGHTS!**

ARE YOU **SURE** I HADN'T RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS? I MEAN...DO YOU THINK I MIGHT HAVE REALLY SEEN SOMETHING?

YOU'D HAVE A FINE TIME **PROVING** IT! SAY, HERE'S SOMETHING YOU MUST HAVE DROPPED...A **LITTLE SILVER BELL!**



The End

SHIP OF THE WALKING DEAD



FROM THE DARKEST DEPTHS OF THE SEA COMES A SOB OF DESPAIR... ON THE TOSSENG SURFACE, A GLIMPSE OF HATRED AND TERROR THAT FADES IN THE SURGING WAKE! "IMAGINATION!", THE CAPTAIN SCOFFS, AND TURNS AWAY, HIS FACE A TWISTED MASKED OF FEAR... AND YOU KNOW THAT HE, TOO, KNOWS THAT A **VAMPIRE OF THE DEEP** HAS CLAIMED ANOTHER VICTIM!

BEHIND MOST TRAGEDIES LIES A HAPPY BEGINNING! BUT FEW STARTED AS JOYOUSLY AS THIS SUMMER CRUISE...

GET ABOARD FOLKS... YOU'VE BEEN INVITED ON THIS CRUISE FOR ONE PURPOSE... TO **ENJOY** YOURSELVES!

AHOY, CAP'N MALONE!

BUT WITH THE VANISHING SHORE, THE LAUGHTER ENDED... FOR ON THE HORIZON, LOOMED **TERROR!**

LOOK, SKIPPER, A **BOAT!** SOMEBODY'S IN **TROUBLE!**

TRUST OLD JANSEN'S SEA LORE, CAPTAIN! ABANDON THIS MYSTERIOUS CASTAWAY... BEFORE IT'S **TOO LATE!**

MY FISHING BOAT SANK THREE DAYS AGO... BEEN DRIFTING... NO FOOD OR WATER...

HMPH! SOMETHIN' FISHY HERE... HE DON'T LOOK LIKE HE AIN'T EATEN FOR THREE DAYS!



BUT DIRK MALONE KNEW ONLY THE UNWRITTEN LAW OF THE SEA...AND THE HELPLESS MAN WAS SAVED!

SINCE YOU'RE A SEAMAN SALAGUA, YOU CAN WORK AS A CREW MEMBER ON THIS VOYAGE!

THANK YOU, CAPTAIN!



THAT NIGHT, THE MOON LOOKED DOWN ON A PEACEFUL SEA!...ONLY THE HELMSMAN FELT THE SUDDEN DAMP CHILL THAT SWEEPED ACROSS THE DECK...

THOUGHT I HEARD A SPLASH...FLYING FISH, PROBABLY...



SUDDENLY...

WH-WHAT'S THAT? NO, NO!



G-GET AWAY...DON'T...



IN HIS CABIN, DIRK NOTICED THE WILDLY SWINGING COMPASS...

THAT FOOL MUST HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL!

CAPTAIN! COME QUICKLY!



HOLY SMOKE! EVERY DROP OF BLOOD HAS BEEN DRAINED FROM HIS BODY!

AYE...AN' IT LOOKS LIKE THE WORK OF A...SEA VAMPIRE!





SEA VAMPIRE?
WHAT DO YOU
MEAN?

I'LL TELL
YOU,
CAP'N---

ONE O' THE LITTLE-
KNOWN LEGENDS O'
THE SEA TELLS ABOUT
THE **SEA VAMPIRES**
---MANLIKE **DEMONS**
WHO CRAWL ABOARD
SHIPS AN' PREY ON
THE CREW!

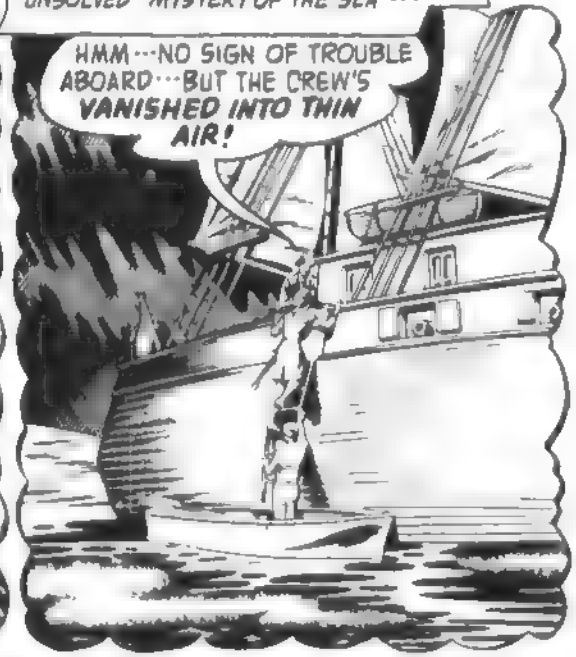


"THEY'D ATTACK A SHIP WHEN IT
BECALMED..."

BREAK OUT
THE GUNS, MEN
---**VAMPIRES!**

YARRGH!

"AN' MAYBE LATER, THE DESERTED SHIP
WOULD BE DISCOVERED...TO BECOME AN
UNSOLVED 'MYSTERY OF THE SEA'..."



HMM...NO SIGN OF TROUBLE
ABOARD...BUT THE CREW'S
**VANISHED INTO THIN
AIR!**

"THE WORST THING ABOUT THOSE
SLIMY DEVILS IS THAT THEY LOOK
LIKE **MEN**...EXCEPT WHEN
SOAKED IN SALT WATER!"

AS OLD JANSEN FINISHED HIS GRISLY
TALE, A CHILL OF IMPENDING TERROR
SWEEPED HIS LISTENERS...

...AN' I THINK THERE'S ONE
OF 'EM ABOARD THIS VESSEL
---**WAITIN' TO KILL US
ALL...ONE BY ONE!**



THE SUN...SUCKS
THE MOISTURE
FROM MY BODY!
I TAKE THE HATED
MAN FORM!

IT IS TIME
TO RETURN
TO THE COOL
SEA...AND
REGAIN YOUR
VAMPIRE
SHAPE!

NOWADAYS, WITH SO
MANY BIG FAST SHIPS,
THE SEA VAMPIRES
HAVE ABOUT DIED
OUT! BUT **SOME**
ARE LEFT---







A MOMENT LATER...



THAT SEEMED TO BE THE ONLY ANSWER...UNTIL NEXT DAY, WHEN THE MATE HEARD A SCREAM, RUSHED BELOW...



BY THE TIME DIRK REACHED THE SPOT, THE MATE, TOO, WAS A VICTIM!



MEANWHILE...



CONCEALING THE SHEER HORROR THAT CLAMPED HIS HEART, DIRK REACHED A TERRIFYING CONCLUSION...

THAT SETTLES IT! **SALAGUA IS THE SEA VAMPIRE!** I COULD PROVE IT BY TOSSING A BUCKET OF SEA WATER OVER HIM... BUT THAT MIGHT BE TOO DANGEROUS!

I'LL WAIT...

DESPERATELY SEEKING A PLAN, DIRK CALLED A MEETING...

ONLY WE THREE ARE LEFT ALIVE! WE'LL DIVIDE THE SHIP'S DUTIES UNTIL WE REACH PORT... TODAY, I'LL VOLUNTEER TO COOK!

HE DESERVES ONE GOOD MEAL... FOR IT WILL BE HIS **LAST!** THEY BOTH **DIE TONIGHT!**

OKAY BY ME!



HERE'S DINNER...IT'LL PROBABLY KILL YOU!

HA! HA! DON'T BE MODEST, CAPTAIN!

Then...AS THE GLOOM OF NIGHT FELL UPON THE TRAGIC VESSEL...

DIRK IS AT THE WHEEL...EVE IN HER CABIN...IT IS TIME TO STRIKE!

IF MY PLAN WORKED, THE VAMPIRE SHOULD BE DEAD BY NOW, OR...**GREAT SCOTT!** THAT'S EVE...SHE'S IN TROUBLE!

OH, NO...**HELP!**

SOMETHING WENT WRONG! HE'S...**STILL ALIVE!**

YOU DIE FIRST... THEN **HIM!**

WITH THE DESPERATE COURAGE OF LOVE, DIRK RUSHED THE FEARSOME MONSTER...

FOOL...DON'T YOU KNOW BY NOW THAT YOUR PUNY MORTAL WEAPONS CANNOT HARM ME? I AM **DEATH-LESS!**

BANG!

BUT AS DIRK FELT THE GATHERING PALL OF DEATH, THE SLIMY FINGERS WEAKENED...

WHAT...HAVE YOU DONE TO ME? THIS FIERY AGONY THAT CONSUMES MY BODY...IT...**ARGH!**

IT'S WORKING AT LAST! AND JUST IN THE **NICK OF TIME!**

VAMPIRES ARE VAMPIRES, WHATEVER THEIR FORM! AND **SILVER** IS THE ONE THING THAT WILL KILL THEM! I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO MAKE A SILVER BULLET-SO INSTEAD, I PUT A FEW DROPS OF THIS **SILVER NITRATE** IN HIS **FOOD!**

HOWEVER, I FORGOT THAT IT HAS TO BE **DIGESTED** BEFORE REACHING THE BLOOD STREAM! THAT'S WHAT **TOOK SO LONG!**

LAND SO... WELL, HERE WE ARE...TOGETHER...

AS A SHIP'S CAPTAIN, YOU CAN **MARRY** PEOPLE, I UNDERSTAND...WELL, HOW ABOUT MARRYING **ME?**

THE END!

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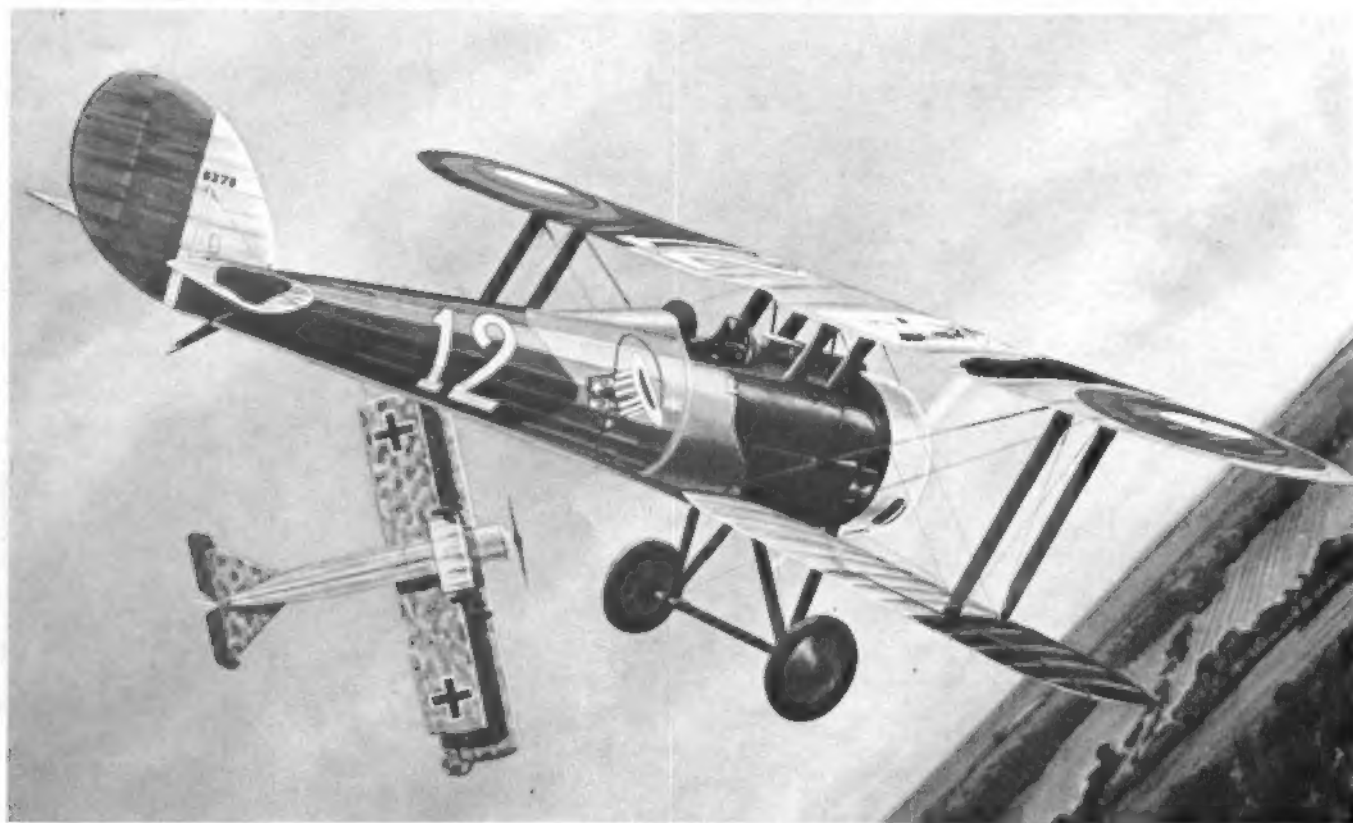
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